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THE CHVRCHES DELIVERANCE,

Containing

Meditations and ſhort notes vppon
The booke of HESTER.

In remembrance of the wonderfull deliue-
rance from the Gunpoulder-Treaſon.

BY

THOMAS COOPER.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

101. c. 103.

AT LONDON.
Imprinted by *G. Eld* for *T. Adams*, and are to be ſold
at the white Lyon in *Paules* Church-yard.
1619.

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To the right worshipfull, and *truly religious Ladies, the mother and* the daughter, The Lady *Katherine Rotheram*, and the Lady *Elizabeth Wakerings my very good Aunt*, and Cousine; Beloued in the LORD, grace and peace in GOD the Father through IESVS CHRIST our common Sauiour.

RIght Christian Ladies, *whome I loue in the truth, till* IESVS CHRIST *be perfited in you. It hath pleased the* LORD of glory, *by a long, yet mild and fatherly visitation, of late to summon me, his* vnprofitable *seruant to make ready* my Account: *In the casting vp whereof finding my selfe indebted vnto your* Ladyships, *for many christian and extraordinary kindnesses conferred vpon me, a dispised brach and out-cast in the world: I haue indeauoured in these my poore labours to make acknowledgement of* my debt, *not with any purpose* to clear the score *(for how should true mẽbers of* Christs *body not be euer bound to each other) but rather with intent to* prouoke to a further debt: *because the debt of loue, as it ought alwaies to be payd, so it must alwaies be due, and the more it is paid the more the debt is increased. Til it be at length perfited, and so fully* recompenced *in heauen. Whether seeing it pleaseth my god very mercifully to hasten me by keeping me through many tedious and lingring infirmities; in an earnest hungring and fainting after* my deliuerance; *therfore haue I rather hastened to performe this duty vnto your* Ladyships, *as to whom in regard of your places such* mementos, *from a withered branche*

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cannot

cannot be vnseasonable: and most seasonable on his part, *to bee preformed, who while hee hath tyme, and can doe no other good, yet hath obtained mercy of the* LORD, *to put his seruants in mind of his wonderfull mercies towards them; that the memoriall thereof may hold them in due thankefulnesse vnto so gratious a father, that so their happinesse in this life may be a pledge vnto them of that glorious crowne which remaines for the Saintes in that blessed Kingdome: These are my heartes desire vnto our gratious* GOD *for you. And that you may be happily furthered thereto, and haue a true and liuely glasse to behold the bounty of our* GOD, *I haue bin bold to committe to your remembrãce that* wonderful deliuerance *of our* Church and State, *from that* horrible plot of poulder-Treason; *wherin euery true hearted* Christian and Subiect *may take a full view of al* GODS former mercies *towards him, and if he do beleeue, may see in the same* a ful assurance *of whatsoeuer blessings of* GOD *are yet laid vp in store for him. The* greatnesse whereof, *howsoeuer I haue heretofore endeauored* once *and* againe *to measure, and so commend my* scantling *therof, to the* due consideration *of a* thankeful heart *yet seeing the measure of that blessing is like the* waters of the sanctuary, *which the more they were measured, the more vnmeasurable they did appeare, till at length they became a deepe, that could not be passed ouer. Therfore I haue bin glad to take this opportunity of my dayes yet lengthned out, once againe to measure this great deepe: And by an history of a like wonderful deliuerance, to reuiue the dead memory therof in the eares of a secure and vnthankefull world. That so I might both* pay my vowes *vnto my* GOD *for my life of late renued me as a prey, and as neere as I may* haue my conuersation in heauen, *imploying the small residue of my wretched life in meditations of* GODS *wonderfull mercies*

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which is the onely seruice that the saints performe in heauen. Oh what a glorious thing it is to be thankfull, when by looing this duty we come neareſt to the Saints in glory! And how wil this wonderful deliuerance teach vs to be thankefull? How is this deliuerance of the Iewes *from* Hamans *malice a moſt liuely glaſſe to behold our deliuerance from the* bloody Papiſts. *And may not the* LORD *lengthen out my threed vntill I haue finiſhed this ſtory. This that I now tender you is but onely the gate into the cittie, if it pleaſe* GOD *that I may go through the Citty (as* Ionas *did) who knoweth whether by that time* Ninive *may repent and turne, and ſo the* LORD *may repent him of the euil, and reuiue the good that is ready to dye.* The patient abiding of the righteous is ioy, and he that beleeueth maketh not haſte: *yet* if we beleeue, we ſhall ſee greater thinges then theſe, and bleſſed are wee if we ſee a farre off. *A leſſon which for* a farewell *I do heartily commend vnto your* Ladyſhips, *not onely to ſee into the preſent, but to behold a farre off, to looke vp to* Moſes to the recompence of the reward, *and not to eſteeme to be accounted* the ſonne of *Pharoahs* daughter. *If we* ſee not the preſent bleſſings *how can we ſee a farre off? And yet we may ſo* doate on the preſent, *as not to deſire to ſee a far off, and if we deſire not, is not the Lord iuſt to giue vs our* preſent deſire, and ſend leaneſſe into our ſoules. *Behold therefore your preſent happineſſe in that wonderfull deliuerance, yet looke vp with* Moſes, *and ſee therein alſo your future happineſſe. And ſo I heartily commend your* Ladyſhips *to the view of* this glaſſe, *and therein alſo to the* mercy of the *almighty, who giue you* wiſdome *to redeeme the time by ſeeing your faces often herein, and hauing viewed, not to forget what* Iacob *did gratiouſly remember, and what* our Sauiour *wiſhed to be*

Geneſ. 32. Luke, 17. 32.

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be remembred of his Diſciples : So ſhall you preuaile with GOD, *and find fauour with men : your age ſhall bee a crowne of glory, and your poſterity ſhall be bleſſed: They ſhal be of you which* ſhal build the old waſte places & ſhal be called the repairers of the breach: the ſtões of the field ſhal be in league with you & the beaſts of the field ſhal be at peace with you: you ſhal laugh at deſtruction & death and ſhal not be affraid of the beaſts of the earth. GOD *hath and ſhall deliuer you from all aduerſity, and you ſhall ſee the* felicity of thé choſen : *theſe bleſſings the* LORD *of glory increaſe vpon your* Ladyſhips, *to your full perfection in* IESVS CHRIST. *To whoſe bleſſed protection I moſt heartily commend both you and yours.*

From my houſe at Couentry
Ianuary 1609.

Your poore kinſman, moſt
bounden in the *Lord Ieſus.*

THOMAS COOPER.

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To the Christian and discerning Reader, *wisdome to see the plague, and* grace to hide himselfe.

Hen great blessings breed security, and prophanesse, wee must looke for sodaine iudgements. These are *begun* and haue *increased* in the land, so much the more *fearefull*, because they are *especially spiritual* and the rather *dangerous*, because they are *lesse discerned*, or, *discerned onely with a carnall eye*, which conceiuing them *natural and ordinary*, yeeld them onely carnall and ordinary respect: Euery man prouides for his owne, but the house of the Lord, lyeth waste: And so we flatter our selues that all is well, when nothing can bee well, it going ill with the principall, *we may sowe much but reape little, and what wee gather is put into a broken bagge, because the* Lords *house lyeth waste, and euery man lookes to his owne. Our great deliuerance* from that diuelish plot of the poulder treason, as it was wonderfull, so it hath passed as *a dreame*, or as a nine daies wonder. And behold now we are awoke, *we are a hungery*, pinched with famine *both of body and soule*: The bird was in the snare, but we haue let her loose. *A blessing* was offered, but the *messe of pottage* hath bene preferred: *Benaydad* findes fauour, and is become *a broken reed to Israell*: and may not our hands bee pierced therwith? *Yea the whole heart is sick and the head is heauy: & from the crown of the head vnto the sole of the foot*, there is nothing whole therin: & which is the greatest misery, though there be *balsom in* Gilead *yet the hurt of the* Virgine Israel *is not healed*: Because *the dead flyes doe corrupt the pretious ointment of the Apothecary*, and the hurt of the daughters of Gods people, is healed *with sweete words*, *crying peace peace* so that we *looked for peace, but behold trouble*, because the *Arme of flesh* hath deceiued vs, and we haue not rested vppon *the strong Tower* Ayea the

Lord

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liueth and *is good vnto* Iſrael, *euen vnto thoſe that are true of heart.* The wiſe man *ſeeth the vally of* Achor, and entereth therin as *into the doore of hope*: And though the plague deuoure but the hindermoſt part of the hoaſt, yet *he ſees the plague* with the eyes of faith, and feare, *and ſo hides him-ſelfe, by departing from euill:* that ſo not being partaker in the ſinne, hee may not ſhare in the iudgement: yet *muſt iudgement begin at the houſe of God*, that ſo the faithfull being tryed may find reſt, while the pit is digged for the wicked. And whoſoeuer ſeekes vnto the Lord God of *Iſrael* in his affliction, hee is found of him: *The more* Iſrael *is oppreſſed*, the more it increaſeth, and by this we know that the Lord fauoureth vs, becauſe he ſuffreth not our enemies to triumph ouer vs: Oh that wee could tryumph ouer them in the remembrance of that *wonderfull deliuerance*, that our God hath wrought for vs! How might we by this haue triumphed, if we had *purſued that victory* and rooted out *Ameleck*, that would haue rooted out vs: but al for the beſt. *Ameleck* muſt remaine as *a pricke in our ſides*, to *let out our corrupt and prophane blood*; our enemies muſt yet be further meanes of our purging and preparing: that when the ſtones are throghly ſquared, Gods houſe may bee perfectly aduanced: And the ſetting vp of the *Arke* will be the finall ouerthrow of *Dagon*. In patience therefore (deere bretheren) committe wee our ſelues into the handes of our faithfull Creator. That his hand is not ſhortned, we may ſee in that *wonderfull deliuerance*. In memoriall whereof, I haue now the *third time*, tendred thoſe meditations, that I might *pay my vowes* vnto the Lord, for the ſanctifiing of that generall deliuerance by a *ſpeciall deliuerance* vnto me: & the rather, becauſe the Lord hath euen now of late *deliuered* me out of the *horrible pit, and reſtored vnto me the Ioy of his ſaluation*, that I might declare the wonders of the Lord in the land of the liuing: *The Lord hath renued me as an example vnto them which ſhall in time to come beleeue this wonderfull worke*. And yet, (bleſſed be our faithfull God) this is a day of good tidings. The *buſh is not conſumed: the ſcepter of* Antichriſt *is broken*, his *ſinne repenteth*, and the *Lord raigneth*, and *hell is inlarged*. And why ſhould I hold my peace? Surely if my ſight

fayle

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fayle me not, I ſee in that deliuerance, *Amelecks* vtter ouerthrow: Oh that *Moſes handes may be held vp ſtill*, that *Ameleck* may be deſtroyed from vnder heauen, for the better ſtrengthning of my weake knees and feeble hands to the due meditation of that wonderful deliuerance! I haue ſpared ſome few houres from my publicke ſtudie, and ſpent them in the meditation of *a like wonderfull deliuerance* of the *Church of God* in former times. *Very malitious* was the *enemie* when nothing would ſatisfie him but the vtter rooting out of the *Church of God*. And ſurely much more malitious our enemies, that had plotted the extreame ouerthrow both of *Church and common-wealth*. 2. *Very patient and wiſe was the Lord* in giuing the aduerſary ſo far his deſire, as euen to haue brought his miſchiefe to the poynt of execution; to make his confuſion the greater, and the *Churches deliuerance* more admirable & comfortable. And ſurely that our *Aduerſaries* had brought their *plotte* within leſſe then eight houres execution after two yeares ſecure contriuing, and ripening thereof: This as it magnified the admirable prouidence of the Lord in ordering the actions of the wicked, ſo it tended to the greater aſtoniſhment and confuſion of Gods enemies, and, notwithſtanding the careleſſe ſecurity of the *Atheiſt*, yet hath, and ſhall make, to the eternal comfort of the true beleeuer. 3. *Wonderfull was the Lord* in diſapoynting the practize of *Haman* and *deliuering* of *his Church*: but that the enemie was *caſt in the pit*, which he had digged for others. Oh! how did this *magnifie the iuſtice of God*, how did it *confirme the faith of the afflicted*? And ſurely did not the Lord ſhew himſelfe much more wonderfull *in our deliuerance*? Was it a ſmall matter to deliuer vs as a prey out of the ſnare of the Fowler, vnleſſe alſo our aduerſaries were conſumed with the poulder which they had prepared to blow vs vp, by an ouer-ruling hand of the Almighty?

This was the Lords doing, and it ought to be maruailous in thy eyes: And marke what I tell thee? *Neuer looke to ſee the face of God in glory for thy final releaſe out of all thy troubles, vnleſſe thou doſt ſee the eſpeciall loue of thy God in this deliuerance: and ſo ſtill deſireſt to ſee further; to the increaſe of thy moſt holy faith; that ſo*

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beleeuing thou maiſt ſee greater things then theſe: yea beſt able to ſee a farre off, euen the finall deliuerance of the Church out of all her troubles. For thy further direction and prouoking therefore to this *Chriſtian duty*, In the feare of God make vſe of this *hiſtory* which I doe tender thee as a glaſſe, wherein thou maiſt dayly view that wonderfull deliuerance. I haue as the Lord hath inabled me, conſidered thy weakeneſſe, and prouided accordingly: That thy edge may be ſtill ſharpened, and the dulneſſe thereof preuented. I haue deuided the ſtory in it parts: tendering thee onely for a taſte, ſome briefe obſeruations on the two firſt Chapters: which containe onely the preface and the preparation to the hiſtory: yet furniſhed and eſpecially concluded, by the diuine diſpenſation, with ſuch fit variety of matter, as may ſerue thee well for a full enterview of Gods prouidence in the deliuerance of Princes and Kingdomes from treaſons and conſpiracies. Here for the time I make my *firſt pauſe*: ſtudying breuity, becauſe this *wanton age* cannot indure long diſcourſes, and my *health* will not indure long ſtudies: if thy appetite be ſharpned, pray for *health*, and liberty of the Goſpell: and (ſo thou *luſt* not after *quailes*) thou maiſt ſhortly by Gods mercy haue more variety. For the preſent conſider my weakeneſſe, and magnifie Gods power: let the *Printer* beare his owne burthen, and yet as he hath prouided, ſo eaſe thy ſelfe, and him, and me: Read with *prayer*, *appetite*, and *humility*: So maiſt thou attaine the *kernell*: And for the *ſhell* neglect it not: if it ſpeake *the language of Canaan*; let it guide thee to our *common City which is aboue*: whether I am haſting; and to this end, tender thee this light, that wee may happily meete there. The Lord haſten *his worke*, confound *Antichriſt*, perfect the gathering in *of the firſt borne*, ſet vp *his ſtanderd and glorifie his ſonne, in all his Sayntes.*

So be it.

Thyne in our common Sauiour,

THOMAS COOPER.

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Obſeruations out of the firſt CHAPTER.

1. *When the wicked are in proſperity then is the Church of God neere great danger.*
2. *The Chronology of the hiſtory examined and determined.*
3. *Of the truth of the Scripture.*
4. *The wicked inioy the greateſt bleſſings in this life.*
5. *God is the Author of gouernement.*
6. *The benefit of gouernement.*
7. *The wicked do abuſe their proſperity to the maintenance of the fleſh.*
8. *Proſperity of the wicked breedeth ſecurity.*
9. *God tranſlates Kingdomes, and remoueth the ſeates thereof,*
10. *That Feaſting is lawfull.*
11. *The conditions thereof: who may Feaſt.*
12. *What cauſes may further it.*
13. *The manner thereof, and matter.*
14. *The end of Feaſting.*
15. *The vertues of the heathen how to be iudged off.*
16. *Courtly ſtate, and life,*
17. *pollicy of worldlings confounded.*
18. *Princes not vnneceſſar ily to burthen their ſubiects.*
19. *They are eſpecially to labour for inward glory.*
20. *Like Prince, like people.*
21. *Wicked Princes ſent for the ſinnes of the people.*
22. *Princes not to ſhew their magnificence in belly-cheere.*
23. *Dauncing of men and women together vnlawfull.*
24. *God puniſheth ſin with ſin.*
25. *Drunkenneſſe the effect of Feaſting.*
26. *The vſe of holy* Ironies *in the word.*
27. *Marke of drunkenneſſe.*
28. *Prophane perſons abuſe their wiues to bee eſpecially baites of luſt.*
29. *Wiues how to be choſen.*
30. *How to be vſed.*
31. *The wicked abuſe Gods bleſſings to their further condemnation.*
32. *Gods bleſſings to the wicked proue ſcourges in this life.*
33. *Courtiers ſlaues to their Princes luſts.*
34. *The Courtly life how to bee accepted and vſed.*
35. *Rules for behauiour in the Court.*
36. *The wicked diſtracted and confounded*

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confounded in all their buſineſſe.

37. Huſbands duties to their wiues, and wiues to their huſbands: Wicked Princes keepe ſtate by anger.

38. Of anger and the occaſions.

39. The lawfulneſſe thereof, & circũſtances required therin. Cauſeleſſe anger how to be repreſſed and reformed.

40. Cloakes of ſinne are meanes of increaſe therof.

41. Worldly Councellors how vainely imployed.

42. Courtiers Vſually brokers for ſinne and contriuers of each others puniſhment.

43. Councellors to bee choſen out of the Nobility.

43. 44. Qualities of good councellors, eſpecially they muſt be religious.

45. How to diſcerne them.

45. Princes muſt not be ſtrange to their ſubiects, but be affable.

46. Tyrants their markes and puniſhment.

47. Wicked pretend law for the ſatisfying of their miſchiefes.

48. Whether a man may be his owne iudge?

49. How a man may be witnes in his owne cauſe.

50. How a man ſhould be approued when he ſtands vppon the teſtimony of his innocency to the world.

51. Wherein a man may bee iudge in his owne caſe.

52. Princes are to referre theſelues to the iudgement of their lawes.

53. Wicked Princes imploy their ſeruants in baſe purpoſes and they are willingly ſlaues thereto.

54. Sinnes of great ones exemplary.

55. Politicians in ſatisfying of the luſts of wicked Princes prouide for their owne.

55. Flatterers and malitious perſons abuſe Princes with whiſperings, and ſurmiſes.

56. Euidence muſt bee of things knowne not ſurmiſed, and of ſuch as know the party.

57. Malice and flattery vnfit accuſers.

58. Puniſhment muſt not exceed the nature of ſinne.

59. Iudges muſt not accept perſons in iudgement.

60. Worldlings preferre the priuate before the publick goood.

61. Wicked haue glorious clokes for their end and purpoſes.

62. Of exemplary iuſtice when to be vſed.

63. Terror no breeder of true loue, where how to reclaime a froward wife &c.

64. Wicked Princes eaſily yeeld to

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to bad co nſell.
65. Wicked inſtrumets of the ful filling of Gods righteous will in their puniſhments for his glory and the good of the Church.
66. God is the author of promotion.
67. The proſperity of the wicked ſhort and dangerous.
68. Wicked in perſecuting their luſts ſerue Gods righteous wil.
69. Huſbands are to rule ouer their wiues.
70. And how far.
71. Wicked muſt free their ſin by making it common to others.
72. Lawes to be publiſhed in the vulgar tongue.

Obſeruations out of the ſecond CHAPTER.

1. Sin how it ceaſeth in the wicked.
2. Gods prouidence diſcouered herein.
3. Occaſions of the ceaſing of ſin in the wicked.
4. How ſin is brideled in the wicked by Gods ſpirit, & how by other meanes.
5. Impoſſible for the wicked to forſake ſinne.
6. The rage of the wicked ſhall ceaſe for the good of the Church.
7. Anger muſt bee renounced, and how.
8. The conſcience cals the wicked to an account in this life.
9. The vſe of it in them.
10. The particular euidence of conſcience.
11. The accuſation of the conſcience in the wicked an hindrance to repentance.
12. Credit in the wicked oppoſed to conſcience, whereby repentance is hindered.
13. Gode iuſtice herein.
14. The wicked how choſers hereof.
15. The conſcience Gods executioner in the condemnation of the wicked.
16. Falſe rules whereby the wicked iuſtifie their actions.
17. How they dul and dead the conſcience.
18. Conſcience and credit in the godly go together.
19. Lawes what perpetuall, and how to bee antiquated.
20. Worldlings why earneſt for the eternizing of their lawes.
21. Vowes and promiſes what, and how to be kept, how to bee ordered.
22. The ſoueraignty of conſcience.
23. The wicked in the troubles of conſcience runne to the world, and carnal helps.
24. Courtiers drowne their princes in pleaſure.

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25. *Wounded conſcience how truly to be releeued.*
26. *Second marriage not vnlawfull.*
27. *Beauty warily to be propoſed in the choyce of a wife.*
28. *Godly auoyd ſuch occaſions as haue intyced them vnto ſin.*
29. *Prophane Courtiers ready to ſatisfie the luſt of their Prince.*
30. *The beſt gifts of the wicked*
31. *Matters of ſtate to be carried with complement.*
32. *Where a wife to be choſen, whether abroad in an other country, or at home.*
33. *Tyrants prey and ryot, on the goods and bodies of their people.*
34. *Miſery of ſuch as liue vnder Tyrants.*
35. *Princes how ſtarre to command their ſubiects.*
36. *The confuſion of Idolatry and carnal wiſdome.*
37. *Natures infirmities to bee cleanſed and abſtinency to bee vſed therein.*
38. *Outlandiſh faſhions vnlawfull.*
39. *Painting of women vnlawfull.*
40. *Young heads fit to giue councel to tyrants.*
41. *Sinne impatient of delay.*
42. *Sinne how to bee preuented.*
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44. *The prophane guiſe of effeminate Princes.*
45. *That* Mordecai *was not carryed away in the Captiuity.*
46. *Scripture not to bee ſtrayned.*
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48. *As alſo in planting the godly among the wicked.*
49. *Gods children remoued out of their habitation and why.*
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51. *The Godly beſt company.*
52. *Why we may conuerſe with the wicked and how.*
53. *GOD giues his children fauour in the eyes of the wicked.*
54. *God no accepter of perſons.*
55. *The continuance of the Church and condition therof, to the worlds end.*
56. *The lot thereof to be ſcattered vppon the face of the earth.*
57. *Gods faithfulneſſe in preſeruing the Church for euer.*
58. *The names to bee giuen to children.*
59. *Genealogies how recorded in the word*
60. *Children ſhall not bee puniſhed for the fathers offence.*

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62. God continueth and blesseth the posterity of the righteous.
63. Posterity how to be preserued.
64. The lot of Gods children to go into Captiuity.
65. Church how prepared to captiuity.
66. Gods iudgements are to bee recorded and meditated.
67. Benefits of Gods iudgements.
68. God often changeth the outward prosperity & visibility of his Church.
69. Changes of the Church, tend to the exceeding good therof.
70. The world confounded by the changes of the Church.
71. Vses of the afflictions of the Church.
72. Great ones drinke deepe of the cuppe of vengeance.
73. God vseth great & mighty enemies for the chastning of his Church—as
74. Standing with his iustice & also—
75. With his mercy.
76. How to make flesh our friend.
77. God often chasticeth his children with the same rodde.
78. God chasticeth his children in measure and by degrees.
79. Gods children are to comfort and relieue each others in their troubles.
80. The bounty of Gods children is no snare, but especially labours the good of the soule.
81. God prouides for his children in trouble with the safety of a good conscience.
82. Whether lawfull for Christians now to change their names?
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83. Kindred to be releeued.
84. Gods children left orphanes in the world.
85. The more excellent gifts of nature, need the straighter bridles.
86. The gifts of nature beeing sanctified are good meanes of preferment.
87. How to vse natures giftes aright.
88. Adoption lawful though—
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90. Who especially to be adopted.
91. Ends of adoption.
92. Orphanes to bee prouided for.
93. God aduanceth his children by fayre and likely meanes.
94. Gods children to yeeld to present necessity, keeping them-selues, from apparant euill.

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euill, and depending on Gods protection.

95. *Gods children the neerer preferment the greater extremities*

96. *God prepares his Church by afflictions to great blessings.*

97. *God breaketh the force of tentations, and prouideth preseruatiues against them.*

98. *Gods children find fauour in the eyes of strangers.*

99. *Wicked haue the shadowes of many excellent vertues..*

100. *Markes of true liberality.*

121. *Officers are to be faithfull in distributing according to their charge.*

102. *God raiseth his to preferment by degrees.*

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105. *The best is dne and bestowed on Gods Childre in this life.*

106. *Truth may bee concealed, and how.*

107. *Cautions to be obserued in concealing truth.*

108. *Religion, when and how to be giuen accoumpt for.*

109. *GOD disposeth the weaknesse of his children, in the accomplishment of his mercy towards them.*

110. *Gods children season each other with graue councell and wholesome instructions.*

111. *Silence a speciall lesson for Courtiers.*

112. *The safety of Gods church ought to be our speciall care*

113. *Obedience to lawfull authority, a true marke of the child of God.*

114. *Sincere obedience rather respecteth the power of the Commaunder, then the worth of the thing commaunded.*

115. *True obedience is performed as well in absence as in presence.*

116. *Parents how farre to extend their care for their children.*

117. *Care how it may stand with the prouidence of God.*

118. *A marke of the wicked to riot out time.*

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120. *Another badge of the wicked to riot out Gods good creatures.*

121. *How to prenent the abuse of the creatures.*

122. *The wicked haue pretences for their greatest abuses.*

123. *Rules for moderation in the Creatures.*

124. *Wicked most eagerly bent vppon their lusts and spare no cost, for the satisfiing thereof.*

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125. *Wicked Magistrates giue the bridle vnto sin and countenance wickednesse.*
126. *Princes how to secure their estates.*
127. *Pleasures of the wicked short and slippery.*
128. *Variety in sinne greatest snare thereto.*
129. *Wicked fall deeper and deeper into sinne.*
130. *The vnsatiableneſſe of the wicked in sinne hath this punishment attending on it in this life that it shall not be satisfied.*
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148. *God makes his children gratious, when it may serue for his glory and their good.*
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FINIS.

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The Churches Deliuerance.

Chapter. 1.

Argument and parts.

King *Ahazueroth* maketh a great banquet to his Nobles and Captaines: so doth the Queene to her Ladies and followers, to the 10. *verse*. 2. The King causeth *Vashti* the Queene to be sent for into his presence, who refusing, is by the aduice of his Princes and Councel put from all regall societie, to the end of the Chapter.

Vers. 1. *In those dayes,*] that is, in the peaceable and prosperous raigne of *Xerxes*, then fell out this danger of the Church, then did the Lord performe this deliuerance; as if the spirit could declare vnto vs that

When the wicked are in greatest security, and prosperitie, then is the Church of God subiect, and neere greatest danger, *Obser.* 1. The wickeds prosperity is the meanes of their greater affliction

1. So doth the Lord hereby make way for the greater confusion of the wicked, in giuing them vp to such a reprobate sense, that whereas they should vse their prosperitie to the glory of God, and good of others, it turnes on the contrary, to the speciall hurt of those, for whose sakes specially they do enioy it.

2 And the wicked in this state, haue more power, and leisure to doe mischiefe.

3 As for the Church of God, it is more subiect to contagion, by smelling of the wickeds prosperity, yea happily escapes not defiling thereby, and therefore had need of such preseruatiues, and purgation to preuent, or purge out her drosse.

Vse. 1. And is it then good wisdome to shroud the Church vnder there prosperity, by making leagues with them

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them, who are the likelieſt rods to correct the ſame? May we not ſee herein the folly of Gods children,
2. who many times proue ſtirrops to raiſe ſuch to promotion who when they are aloft, will proue their greateſt ſcourges?
Pro. 29. ought we not to mourne for the proſperity of the wicked,
3. and then to prepare our ſelues to ſome great trials preſaged thereby? Let vs wiſely looke our owne faces in this glaſſe
4. and * and ſee whether our daunger, was not neereſt, when we were moſt ſecure, reioycing our ſelues in the hight of our proſperity, and let vs keepe downe thoſe *Canaanites* that they may not proſper vnder vs.

Of Ahaſhueroth. *That is, the Hereditary Prince.*

Obſe. 1. Whereby (me thinks) that great controuerſie among the Interpreters, what King is here ment, whither *Cambiſes*, *Darius*, or *Xerxes*, may eaſily be reſolued. That it cannot be *Darius*. i. becauſe he was not the hereditary Prince, in that he was choſen by an accident, and therefore it muſt needs be *Xerxes*, who not only was hereditary from his father, in that he was the naturall ſonne of *Darius*, but further alſo by the mothers ſide may be truly called the Hereditary Prince; as being borne of *Atoſſa*, the daughter of *Cyrus* his great grand-father. Secondly, it may be plainely reſolued from *India* to *Ethiopia*, or a hundreth and ſeauen and twenty Prouinces: which cannot be vnderſtood, neither of *Cambiſes* becauſe hee had not ſo large a dominion, neither rained ful 8. years, wheras this *Ahaſhueroth* is afterward recorded to haue raigned 12: neither of *Darius* becauſe ſo large a kingdom is not atcribed to him by any memorial, & therfore it muſt need decifer *Xerxes* vnto vs. And ſurely how fitly did the Lord diſpoſe the trial of his Church in his time, who as by his baſenes and intemperancy, he was made an inſtrument to bring the Church of God to the pits brinke: ſo was he, after the deliuerance of the Church, made a memorable ſpectacle of Gods wrath, in the ouerthrow of that his huge army by a ſmall hand-full of the Grecians, according to that of the ſpirit of God. *The right-*
8. *teous eſcape out of trouble, and the wicked come in their ſtead.*

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ſtead. It followeth.

This is Ahasueroth) by this repeating of the name in this *Parentheſis* with an adition of diſtinction, we may obſerue the care of the ſpirit of God to iuſtifie the truth of the ſtory by a circumſtance of Cronology, and thereby are taught; That whereas this name *Aſhachueroſh* ſignifieth an Heriditary Prince, and was giuen vſually to the Kings of Perſia as an enſigne of honor (as *Pharaoh* and *Ptolomy* was to the Egiptians) 1. that our ſpeciall triall of the truth of the Scripture; is from ỹ exact agreement in the computation of time, 2. That ciuill titles of honor are to be giuen euen to prophane magiſtrats. *Obſer.* 1. Auoucheth the truth of the Scripture.

That raigned from India euen to Ethyopia]

Here the holy Ghoſt ſets out vnto us the large bounds of this Perſian Monarchy, when it drew neere to it diſſolution, out of which we are taught many notable obſeruations. As. *Doctr.*

That euen wicked and reprobate Princes haue attained very large & fruitfull dominions: the reaſon is 1. becauſe the Lord hath free power to giue the earth to whome it pleaſeth him. 2. becauſe the Lord vſeth them as ſcourges to the wicked that ſo his iuſtice might appeare more gloriouſly. 3. He ſhewes his great bounty and long ſuffring to the wicked in giuing them herein more then their hearts can deſire to make them without excuſe. 4. he makes way for the breathing and increaſe of his Church, which hath both ſome ſhelter in theſe large dominions and hath wonne ſome hereby to God, and laſtly hereby hee prepares the wicked to their greater deſtruction, who the more they receaue ſhall haue more required at their hands, and the mighty ſhall be mightely tormented: Hence we learne not to marueaile or fret at ỹ great proſperity of Gods enemies, neither to enuy them therin, nor deſire to be like them, aſſuring our ſelues that all there proſperity ſhall ſerue the Churches turne, and if they ỹ knew not God are thus recompenced on earth, how great then may we imagine our reward to be in Heauen. *Raigned*] in that the holy Ghoſt implies a peaceable ſubiection of ſo many diuers Prouinces and different

The wicked enioy great proſperity.

Luke. 12.

Pſal. 37.
Pſal. 73.

Mat. 5.

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God is the author of gouernment. 5. Doctr. Psa. 75.

different nations both in language and nature vnder one Monarch, we learne here also by a consequent, that gouernment is of the Lord. *Pro.* 8. by him Kings raigne, it is the Lord that sets vp and pulleth downe, for he onely makes to be of one mind in an house, he only knits the hearts in such vnity, he only can bridle the different natures and conditions of the most barbarous; and therefore as our Christian.

1. Rom. 13. 2. liberty must not take away ciuill obedience, so must our

2. ciuill obedience be also for conscience, not with Popish re-

3. seruations, or *Anabaptisticall* presumptions, but we must

Iere. 27. 19. euen pray for the life of *Nebuchadnezzar* and in the peace

4. of his citty we shall haue peace, remembring that seeing God appoints gouernment, therefore he is aboue it that so we may giue vnto *Cæsar* the body and goods with a good

Math. 22. conscience, which are due vnto him, and reserue vnto our God the rule of the conscience, which is his immediate peculiar aboue *Cæsars*.

Ouer an hundred and twenty Prouinces.

Obser. 6. The benefit of gouernment. See wee here the great benefit of gouernment that vnites together so many and different nations, and that in such peace and outward safety that now they are one helpfull to the other and all obey one head. And learne we to be thankefull for gouernment, though it altogether sute not with our desires, knowing that it is better to haue a

1. Sam 12. Iudg. 17. 1. Tim. 2. *Saule* to defend vs from the Philistins then that there should bee no King in Israell that euery one may do what he listeth, and what is wanting in gouernment, learne we to supply by prayer to our God, and more free and conscionable obedience: And seeing policy is no better a band to bind diuers natures together, but at the last they are no better then brethren in euill, embrace we the bond of perfection which proceeds from the feare of God, that so the Lyon and the Lambe may dwell together, yea the Lyon may be so changed into the Lambe that there may be the vnity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Vers. 2. In those daies] .i. when *Ahashueroth* had obtained victory ouer his enemies, and thereupon *sat in his throne*. i. that

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that is inioyed outward peace and was drowned in securi- ty, then gaue he his mind to feasting, and so made way for new troubles. As if the spirit would hereby shew vnto vs how the wicked doe vse their prosperitie : namely they passe and spend it all in excesse and abuse of Gods blessings. A thing they must needes fall into , if wee consider ei- ther the end why God bestowes prosperitie vpon them, namely to fat them vp to the day of slaughter, or their de- sire of prosperitie, which is onely for the maintenance of the flesh , or lastly their secret feare that doth assault them for the change therof, and therefore they will take their full of it while it lasteth, wherby they become executioners of Gods purpose against them-selues. Hereby we learne, as not to measure mens happinesse by prosperitie, but by the right vse of it; so seeing it is so apt to be abused , feare wee rather this condition then greedily desire it, and seeing there is beauty in heauen which cannot bee corrupted nor taken away ; looke we with *Moyses* to the recompence of that reward , and so choose we rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God , then to inioy the pleasures of sin for a season.

7 *Obs.* Wicked do abuse their prosperity to the maintenance of the flesh.

2 7. *Doctr.*

1 Ierem. 12. 13.

2 Psal. 73.

1

2

3 Heb. 11.

4

[*When King* Ahashuerash *sate*] &c. Behold how the fruite and peace of prosperitie in the wicked, namely they sitte at ease & are drowned in se- curity, so was the world when the church was in affliction, so was *Laish* when euill was neere them : And surely no maruaile if the prosperity of the wicked make them secure, seeing their hearts are set on it, so they dreame of no other happynesse, and so by Gods iustice are hereby prepared to their destruction. Hee that is wise shall vnderstand those thinges, and to whome the Arme of the Lord shall reueale them, hee will not sette his heart on such shadowes which may so grossely bewitch him, but rather feare him-selfe in prosperitie to preuent securitie : he will see in the se- curitie of a state the iminent change of its prosperitie. And so seeing the plague will hide him-selfe : and see- ing all earthly happynesse carryes it bane with it. Hee

8 *Obs.* Prospe- ritie breeds se- curity in the wicked. Zach, Iud, 18.

1 Thess, 5 3.

1

2 Prouer, 22. Iudg. 2. 17.

3

4

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1 Pet. 2. 12 4 5 will secure himselfe of heauen by beeing a stranger on the earth and content himselfe with *Baruch* that hee hath his life for a prey.

Ierem. 45. *Obser.* God transl. his Kindomes and remoueth their nest. *Which was at Susan*] 1. Loe here the *Persian* hauing spoyled and brought to ruine the *Assyrian Monarchie*, translates the Imperiall state from *Babilon*, to *Susis*, in *Persia*. Which whether he did it for his greater security, as trusting his owne nation rather then strangers, or because hee would haue all the glorie and profit redoun'd to his owne countrimen. Yet here wee see both *the power of God* in changing of Kingdomes, as also the truth of Gods threatning against *Babell*, that it should bee desolated, and *Lasty the vicissitude of prosperity*, euen in the most happiest; *Babilon* was, and *Susan* is, now *Susan* was and what is *permanent*.

Esa. 47

1 2 3 Esay 4. 5 1 Pet. 1 2 Cor. 3. *Vse* 1. And therefore who would set his heart vpon that which hath wings, and flieth away so swiftly, *rather rest* wee on Gods word, that the glory of flesh is but as the flower of the field, and *wee daylie changed* by it from glorie to glorie, that so wee may liue for euer in glory.

Why this feast was ordained, 2 3. Vers. *The third yeare hee made a Feast.*] *1.* The third yeare of his raigne after in the the former yeare hee had reclaimed the *Ægiptians*, which had reuolted now beeing in peace, both to *glorifie his* armie for the former victory, also *to enflame his wariors*, to a new expedition; hee solemnizeth this royall feast.

Obser. 10. Feasting lawfull. *A thing in it selfe indifferent*,] and in the right vse, *lawfull*: that as souldiers after long trauaile should haue some refreshing, and that by the bounty of the Prince they should bee feasted together in a more liberall vse of the creatures of GOD: so *euen Christians also may* bee enlarged herein: *As beeing both the ordinance* of GOD himselfe in the ceremoniall law, the equity whereof continueth to the worlds end: *Hauing causes and occasions*, fauling out in the whole course of life: as *thanksgiuing*, *society &c.* Hauing an appointed *time* set

Reasons. Exod. 23. Leuit. 23. 2 1 downe

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downe by the ſpirit of GOD, *and laſtlie warranted by* that *Chriſtian liberty*, which is reſtored vnto vs in Chriſt Ieſus, and by vertue thereof *practized by the Saints*, both before, and ſince the comming of our Lord Ieſus. Eccleſi. 3. 3 1 Cor. 3. 23 4 Gene. 21 Ioh. 2 2 3 Gal. 5. 13 4

Vſe. *And therefore* as wee may not either preciſely with the *Anabaptiſt*, deny our ſelues wholy this liberty, or with the *ſuperſtitious Papiſt*, deminiſh and depraue the ſame; by *making difference* of *meates: ſo we muſt bee carefull*, that *libertine* like, we abuſe not this holie *libertie as an occaſion to the fleſh*; but herein ſerue one another in a moſt holie loue.

This wee ſhall doe if wee keepe our ſelues within *theſe bounds* in the vſe of this liberty: whereby wee ſhall truely examine, this feaſt of *Ahaſhueroſh*.

Obſer. 11. Conditions of holy feaſting. Who may feaſt. 1 Tit. Luk. 16. 12 1 Tim. 4. 5 Pſalm 14. 8

Firſt wee muſt conſider the perſons that may feaſt, not euery one, becauſe euery one hath not where-with-all, no not euery one that hath: becauſe many haue which haue no *right* therein, neither know how to vſe the bleſſings of GOD. But hee onely may lawfully feaſt, vnto whom as the LORD hath beſtowed a larger portion in his generall prouidence, that ſo hee may haue where-with to take his libertie, ſo hee finds this portion *ſanctified* vnto him by the ſpeciall prouidence and loue of GOD in Chriſt Ieſus, that ſo hee may vſe this liberty aright. 1 Tit. 5

Vſe. And this as it condemneth all Popiſh and Heatheniſh feaſting, vnto whom beeing *impure, all things are impure*: ſo alſo by the ſame rule is this feaſt of Ahaſhueroſh in the place 1. condemned.

2. Wee are to way the *fit cauſes* of feaſting, which the ſpirit of God ſets downe to be theſe. Cauſes of feaſting.

1. The 1. is the *approouing or externall efficient cauſe*, vnder GOD which is the *Magiſtrate*, who onely hath power to authorize theſe publique feaſts, and from whom the true iuſtification thereof doth proceed. Efficient Magiſtrate. Nehem. 8.

2. Is the *materiall cauſe*, namely the *plentifull proviſion* to ſupply the ſame. Wherein theſe rules are to bee obſerued. Materiall cauſe.

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Prouiſion. *The prouiſion* muſt be ſuch as muſt bee *whole-ſome* for noriſhment 2. *eaſie of priſe* 3. not *farre fet*, when it may bee had neerer hand, as if nothing were good which were not outlandiſh, and the more coſt more worſhippe, 4. *prepared alſo frugally*, rather to further ſobriety, then intice to gluttony.

Formall cauſe. 3. Time. Luk. 18. Eſay. 58. 4. Rom. 2. 15. Eſa. 5. *For the forme and manner of the feaſt*, here muſt be conſidered 1. the *time*, which is not euery day but ſeldome: 2. *not the Saboth*, but on ſome weeke day. 3. *not when the Church of God is in troubles*, for then we muſt weepe with them that weepe: 4. *nether many daies together*, as here it was, *but onely ſome ſeaſonable part of one day*, ſo that wee may withall, *follow both our generall and particular callings* By which circumſtances this feaſt of *Ahaſhueraſh* is condemned, in that it is ſaid to be *An hundred and twenty daies.*

v. 4. Gueſts. Eſay. 5. 8. *Obſerue* the *fit gueſts* to a feaſt, wherein as we are to vſe an holy indifferency, in regard that all are of our fleſh; ſo in this differency wee are ſpecially to reſpect thoſe, that excell in grace and ſo to haue our tables furniſhed, with the houſe-hold of faith: not the *rich* onely, but the *poore* aſwell as they, and the *poore not ſimply*, becauſe they are poore; but becauſe they are *poore in ſpirit*, *and receiue the Goſpell.*

Gal 6. 10. Mat. 5. Mat. 11.

Sauce. *See we prouide good ſauce to our feaſts*: not *idle talking*, and *fooliſh ieſting*, not *ſlaundering and reuiling*, nor *amorous daliance*, but our ſpeech muſt be *ſeaſoned with fault*, that ſo it may ſeaſon our feaſting. To this end as it is fit *to ſanctifie the feaſt by prayer and the word*, ſo to preuent vaine ſpeeches, *intermediate holy conference* is moſt fit and neceſſary, or elſe ſome quick and ſauory queſtions; and laſtly the ſtrength thereof is to be returned vnto GOD, in thankeſgiuing: If any thinke *that muſicke is not an vnſeemely companion* of ſtate feaſts, ſurely as I gaine-ſay it not altogether in them; ſo would I wiſh great wiſdome to be vſed therein both 1. for *the makers* of the muſicke, that

1 Tim 4. 5. Mat. 14. 15. Iudg. 14. Muſicke how lawful at feaſts

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that they be not of *the ordinary mummeries*, in that kind and 2 for *the manner of the muſicke*; *that it be graue and reuerent*: as alſo for *the vſe, that* it bee rather onely *to ſhew that I haue liberty therein*, then to venter on a more liberall vſe thereof, leſt it tend to the ſatiſfying of the fleſh. Steward and Attendants.

Better attendance without exception, are *frugality*, and *ſobriety*: the former teacheth vs not to make *ſpoyle or riot* (as the minde is) but to husband well the feaſt, and *to gather vp the reſidue that none be loſt*: the latter, inſtructeth vs to *keepe our right in the creature*, not to make them our maiſters, by ſurfeting and drunkenneſſe, but ſo to riſe from feaſting as that we may be fit for prayer, or any other duty of our callings whatſoeuer, neither of which becauſe they were kept in this Kingly feaſt, but all to the contrary; therefore is this feaſt alſo condemned from the manner thereof. *Onely one* thing is here ſpecially obſerued by the holy ghoſt. *Namely that the drinking was by an order none might compell*, but euery one was left to his liberty, to take what hee pleaſed, which though it be no ſimple approbation of the feaſt, becauſe it was rather a qualifying of that euill cuſtome in ciuilty which then it ſeemes was in vſe, namely *to compell men to drinke by meaſure*, then an holy rule to prouide for ſobriety: whereas indeed their ſhould rather haue beene an order to *haue ſtinted that liberty*, to which euery one was left, whereby they were apt enough to exceed, though they were not compelled by others, (ſuch glorious ſonnes are the vertues of the wicked) yet ſhall this ſhadow of vertue proceeding either from the light of nature or from common ciuility, be a ſwift witneſſe againſt our abhominable cuſtome in this kind: where *the grace* of our feaſting, *is thus to be compelled*, where not to *lie vnder the table*, is counted *diſtoialtie*; and cruelty againſt a mans ſoule, is eſteemed the greateſt curteſie. Frugality Sobriety Ciuility verſe 8

Now

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Finall causes and ends of feasting.

Now touching also the end of feasting, they are these: 1 *the glory of God*, not the setting out of our owne magnificencie, our ostentation of, *Our riches and glorie* as is the manner of rich mens feasts, for which also this feast vndergoes the censure: neither *for suspition*, as if there were more holynesse in these festiuities. A fearefull brand vppon Popish feasts.

1 Cor, 10, 31.

2 *A second end is thankefulnesse vnto God for his mercies*, which we doe vsually expresse by the more liberall vse of the creatures, there-by intending to shew our mercy towards others: and herein this *feast* was faultie.

3 *A third end*, is *continuance of loue and amitie among Christians*, not that our tables should be snares to intrap our brother, that wee may see his nakednesse, or strippe him of his clothes; not by inflamation of the creature, to bee inraged one against another as here it fell out in this propliane *feast*.

Abac, 2.

4 A *Fourth end*, is to *shew our Christian libertie*, in the bountifull vse of Gods blessing, and so *to resemble* vnto

Esay, 25.

5 vs that *feast* of satisfying, in the Kingdome of heauen.

6 *And lastly the releeuing of the poore* hath heere *its place:* for whome wee are especially stewards in what is *our plus*. A shadow whereof though wee finde in this *feast*; in that it is saide: *The King made a feast* to the people; yet was this no true charitie, because without *faith*, and in-deed rather to shew his pompe, and gratefie the people, that they might bee more willing afterward to drudge for him, then of any conscience to comfort and refresh them: Especially if wee consider, that as the people generally pay for this excesse, and so were requited but with a feather for a goose (as we say in the prouerb) so only the people of *Susis* were feasted by the King, whereas those of the Prouinces had their teeth cleane ynough: wherto if we shal adde, that to Cittizens, feasting is not dainty, w is rare among ỹ country people because neither their leisure, nor meanes will afford the same we shall finde

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find ỳ this feasting of the *Susians* was rather a iustifying of that wherin they were too much faultie alreadie, then any true reliefe of their wants or gratification of their paines.

Whence we may obserue .1. how to determine of their actions, who are without God in Christ Iesus: *Namely that they (as them-selues acknowledge) are but shadowes of vertues, and deceiptfull sinnes*, vnder pretence of libertie, satisfying our inordinate lusts. Whereby wee become slaues vnto Gods blessings, when wee would shew our power ouer them. *Obs* 12 Virtues of the Heathen. *Splendida peccata sim vlachra virtutū.*

1 *Vse.* Wherby wee are taught, as to condemne nature, and the glorious shewes therof, because it greatest liberty is the most dangerous snare: *So to seeke for our most glorious libertie in Christ*; who *beeing once ours, all is ours also*: wherby hauing a *right* in these blessings, we shal haue also *grace to vse them well*, that so we may *lay vp a good foundation against the day of account.* 2 1 Cor, 3. 1 Tim, 6.

We haue heere a liuely Image of the prophane courtly life. and so consequently of the world it selfe. All for the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life: nothing for the soule or for the happinesse of the same. 13 *Obs*, State of the court & world.

1 *Vse. Wherein we may see* the notable pollicy of Satists, that as they are in place aboue other; so wanting indeed true vertue, wherby they may be manifested to the harts of their people, and to procure and hold them in loue and obedience; Yet in these outward thinges at least they will be singuler and exceed; which being that which most do hunt after and admire; therefore by these they rather desire to obtaine an outward admiration and fayre reuerence of the most, then by true vertue to be loued of the best: Which as it is *a deepe mistery of their highest wisdome*, to coulor their inward villanies, *so may we herein obserue the admirable iustice of God*, in taking these wisemen in their craftinesse, and thereby making way for their destruction, that their excessiue pompe, breeding secret enuy, while it is flattered with outward applause, and fayned deuotions, doth therby nourish *discontent*, and so dislike of 1 Iohn, 2.16. *Obs.* 14 Pollicy of worldly greatnes confounded. 2

their

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their perſons: and this diſcontent being inraged, by *impoſing new burthens* (which are vſually the effects of princes vaine expences) breake out often into treaſons, and ſubuerſions of their greatneſſe.

Which though it bee no iuſt cauſe for ſuch outrage in ſubiects, becauſe vengeance is mine (ſaith the Lord) and they are not their owne, yet may great Potentates heere learne not vnprofitably this leſſon, *Not vnneceſſarily to oppreſſe their ſubiects by ſuch ſuperfluous pompe and vanitie:* Becauſe howſoeuer the ſubiect may and muſt beare, yea till his backe cracke againe, *Yet his patient bearing* ſhall moue the Lord to iealouſie, who being a helper of the oppreſſed, and abaſer of the mightieſt, will heare the cry of the poore that are thus wilfully oppreſſed, and vnlooſe euen the choller of Kinges to the deliuerance of his ſeruants.

Rom, 12.

15 Princes are not vnneceſſarily to burthen their ſubiects. *Vſe.*

prouer, 22.

And ſeeing that earthly greatneſſe is an image of the heauenly, as proceeding from thence, and a gratious meanes therto: therfore are earthly Princes taught heere another leſſon, *Namely to labour eſpecially for inward glory:* Whereby as they ſhall *ſanctifie*, and ſo *qualleſie*, all their outward greatneſſe, to *ſecure* it from danger, and make *it leſſe burthenſome*; ſo, for the ſauor of their good oyntments ſhall their ſubiects *truly loue them*: By which coniunction of ſpirits, all things ſhall be eaſie, *ſuſpitions ſhall ceaſe from ſuperior*; and *greeuances from beneath*: and both Prince and people, ſhall happily goe vp together to builde the houſe of GOD, when the Magiſtrate by example ſhall lead them the way: Thus by this ſweete harmony ſhall heauen bee vppon earth in an heauenly conuerſation, that earth may reſt in heauen for euermore.

16 Princes to labour ſpecially for inward glory.

The contrary whereof is moſt apparant in this preſident: *Here is a prophane and luxurious King: and here are like ſubiects*, i. *becauſe* we are both apt rather to liue by examples then by lawes, *and indeed* it is not ſafe to croſſe euen bad examples: As beeing the maine ſtreame of the

17 Like prince like people.

I

8

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the worlde to maintaine ſinne, and who ſhall without danger ſtriue againſt the ſtreame. 2

1 *Vſe.* By how much ought Princes to be more carefull of an holy conuerſation, as beeing not onely vnder God, vnto whome they fall (and it is a fearefull thing to fall into the handes of the liuing God) how-ſoeuer they may ſtand and beare it out before men: *but in this alſo that* they are ſette ouer men; beeing examples of their vices, they thereby are markes of their mallice: ſo that brethren in euil, ſhall be brethren in puniſhment. Yea the greater ſinner the greater torments. 2

And ſeeing God ſends wicked Princes for the ſinnes of a people: Let men *be angry with their ſinnes*, and not with God or his ordinance, by their *cheereful* obedience, witneſſing their *true repentance*: ſo ſhal they either *be able to beare the yoake*; though it be as heauy as *Rehobohams* ſcorpions, or according to their abilitie, the *yoake ſhall be bridled*, or in due time, *taken of their ſhoulders*. 3 Wicked Princes ſent for the ſins of the people.

As for thoſe that inioy the bleſſing of good gouernment: Let them be thankefull vnto God, in acknowledging their owne vnworthyneſſe, *and let them* vſe this great bleſſing in feare and reuerence: *taking* this oportunitie to build vp Gods houſe, *and mourning with thoſe* that are making of brickes; and toyling in the mines: *not ſetting vp their reſt*, as if this were all their happyneſſe; *nor flattering ſuch golden times*, as that there may not be better: *but ſtill forgetting that which is behinde*, in ſteed of that which is before. *Yea eſteeming all as dung*, in compariſon of Chriſt Ieſus; *refuſing with* Moſes *to bee counted the ſonne of* Pharoes *daughter, as hauing reſpect to the recompence of the reward,* 4 Nehemi. 2. 4. Heb. 11. v. 25.

Thus may we truly iudge of feaſting: And hereby alſo iudge this feaſt of *Ahaſhuerus*, to bee prophane and ſuperſtitious. Verſe, 5.

Some-what may here be pretended *iuſtifiable in ciuilitie*, as fit for the ſtate and magnificence of ſo mighty a Monarch: in that it is ſaid, *it was done according to the power of the King.* Wherein howſoeuer the ſpirit of God doth Verſe, 7.

graunt

19 Princes not to shew their magnificence in belly cheer.

graunt a proportion of the feast to the power of the King, yet doth he not at all iustifie this superfluous proportion, *as if it were fit for Princes to shew their power to the vtmost in such vaine and excessiue expences*, but rather Ironically taxeth this ostentation of power in such vnnecessary occasions, which rather should haue bene extended in more necessary matter for the glory of God, and publike good of the common-wealth: and yet if any commendation be picked out here, it is only such *as the Lord commended the vniust steward*, which being only good after the opinion of ỹ world, for a misconceiued wisdome, was thereby a greater condemnation of folly in the court of conscience.

Luke, 16.

This the spirit doth liuely set out vnto vs, by the *euent* thereof. Namely *the breach* betweene the King and his wife: then which their could be no more fearefull euent, both to declare the vnlawfulnesse of the feast, as also to punish the King for his intemperancy therein.

Verse, 9. The Queene *Vashtie* made a feast also for women.

The occasion to this breach is set downe in the ninth *Verse*. Namely a shewe of modestie, in the Queene, who refrained from the company of the King, and his Princes, at this great sollemnitie. Which whether it were *of pride*, because she would keep state by her selfe: *or of necessitie*, because either the custome of the country, or the Kings Iealousie would not allow her presence among so many of ỹ other sex: Yet surely this may condemne *our most lasciuious mingling of both sexes together in dancing, and such like meetings*, howsoeuer it cannot excuse her for her after disobedience.

20 Dauncing of men and women vnlawfull.

21 God punisheth sinnes with sinne. Verse, 9. 1 Iam, 25. Prou. 23. 3 Phil, 20. 3

And now behold the iustice of God, in beating the wicked with their owne rod, King *Ahashueroth* makes a feast and *while hee sinnes with excesse, he is punished by the same*, hee lookes vpon the wine in the cuppe, and tarries long at it, and loe saith the spirit *vppon the seauenth day hee is merry with wine* (that is according to the phrase, he is bitten with it.) A most righteous hand of God vpon vain-glorious persons, that *as they make their belly their God, so their glorie should be their shame*: The King is disgraced by his feast

22 Drunkennes the effect of feasting. Prouer, 21.

which

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which he made so much for his honour. *His wine became a mocker, and strong drinke rageth.*

A most vsuall effect of prophane feastings to bite with drunkennesse, whereby we are often prouoked to bite and deuoure each other.

And not vnlikely to fall out if *we consider*, that oportunity and meanes are (to the best) inticements to allure; but to the wicked *cart-ropes*, to hale on sinne. *If we obserue* the policie of Sathan, who hath so peruerted the naturall iudgement, as in all things, so especially in *indifferent*, that *the abuse goes currant for the right vse thereof*, and not to bee drunke at feastings, is not to feast aright. 1 2

Especially, if we obserue the iustice of God, in punishing sin with sinne, prophane feasting, with filthy vomitings: And herein most eminent; that wheras such feasting is intended for the shew of our greatnesse, and glory of our magnificence, *our wisdome is herein mightily confounded*, in that our glory becomes our shame. Esay. 28. 3 4

Wherin we may learne, as, *to condemne this sinne in other*, especially at such times when it hath such fauourable construction, and allowance, as being the time to shew our greater zeale and courage against the same: *so when we are feast-makers, to giue wholesome lawes of temperance*, not remouing only the apparant abuse, that men should be compelled: *But rather stinting men*, as King *Edger* did, that they exceede not health and sobrietie: Whereby wee shall not onely keepe peace in the conscience, and of the table so; but cutte of all hope, to bee insnared in this sin (a matter especially aimed at by the drunkerds at these times, to bring other into ỹ same excesse with them) *And further also*, putting drunkards to confusion, in ỹ wee will not exceed with them, we shal happily (by Gods mercy) bring them to repentance; *and so in time*, both ease the Land of this crying sin, & likewise of the iudgments due therto: and also continue ỹ wine and oile and such other good blessings, w^ch^ for our abuse of them in this excesse are begun, and further threatned to be taken away from vs. 1 Polidor. 4 5 6 Ioel, 1.

Thus

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Thus you see the occasion of drunkennesse, the best vse likely that prophane men make of all feastings. Now let vs further consider the sinne it selfe, it is here said: *He was merry with wine.*

In which phrase of speech, the Spirit of God, as he doth set out an effect of large drinking, namely to make men merry, so withall he doth *ironically discouer the cloake*, which the world casts ouer this sinne, to couer its shame: Namely, (*to call drunkennesse mirth*) because some mirth is lawfull; therefore the worlde concludes it is good to bee merry, and so consequently not euill to be drunke.

23. The vse of holy *Ironies* in the word.

A thing not vsuall to the holy Ghost to speake *Ironically* after the opinion of the flesh, *both to* discouer the desperate blindnesse of the wicked, in cloaking vices with the shewes of vertue: *as also prophetically* to publish Gods righteous sentence against rebellious sinners, namely that they shall be giuen vp to this reprobate sence, as to *further* and approue very grosse impieties, that so not feeling the sinne, they may follow it still: and so hauing made vp the measure of their sinne, that now lastly they may be prepared to their finall condemnation; the spirit of God in these *Ironicall* confessions, *proceedes spiritually* to execute this vengeance: hereby setting such a marke of proofe vppon them as shall make them vtterly without excuse, as implying thereby that they hate to be reformed, and yet thereby also harden them in their sinne: *And therefore let no man reproue*, but let drunkennesse be counted mirth, and *euill be taken for good. Reioyce oh young-man, and take thy pleasure: Let him that is filthy be filthy still.* Wherby not onely *the word becomes a stumbling blocke* to harden them in their sinne; But, *because they will not obey the truth, therefore shall the Lord giue them vp to beleeue lies:* Behold saith the Lord there shal be like Priest, like people, *to preach of wine and strong drinke vnto them*, deluding vnstable soules, that drunkennesse is mirth, and to be merry is good: And I the Lord *haue sent such Prophets*. Yea I haue sent him, and hee shall preuaile, *the foole shall make a sport of sinne*, and *they shall*

Reuel. 22.
Esay. 9. 11.
1
2
3
Prouer. 23
4 note.
Ose. 4.
Esay. 5.
Eccle. 11.
Reuel. 22.
2 Thess 2. 12.
2 Mich.
Ezech 14.
Prou. 11.

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shall thinke they doe God good seruice, that performe vileſt parts againſt his deereſt ſeruants. Ioh. 16. 2.

Vſes. And doth the world count good euill, and euill good? doth the word to this purpoſe ſpeake often in the worlds language? Oh then what meruaile is it if the *word bee a ſtumbling block* to the world? what need had wee of eye-ſalue, *to diſcerne this difference*. When the ſpirit ſpeaketh according to it one verity, and when hee expreſſeth our vanitie, how ought wee to *maintaine the true light of conſcience*? Certainly howſoeuer the ſpirit may ſpeake fairely of ſinne, as therein expreſſing what the world would haue deemed, *Yet the conſcience hereby will not excuſe for ſinne*. And though falſe teachers may cunningly dawbe vp the ſame, yet the *gaine-ſaying conſcience will diſcouer the vntempered morter*. The beſt approbation of him, ſhall be that he is a flatterer, and the beſt comfort to the conſcience, that hee is but a miſerable comforter: Nay to adde further the ſhame of this dawbing: *euen the world it ſelfe ſhall diſcouer it owne blindneſſe*, and though all ſhould bee ſilent, euen the ſinne it ſelfe will ſpeake, that ſuch mirth is drunkenneſſe, and ſuch good is euill. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Hearken I pray you to the circumſtances of the Text: *Vpon the ſeauenth day*. The King (it appeares) ſat well by it, and therefore, if *they that tarie but one day*, will bee enflamed with the wine, we muſt not imagine, but the King had his burden: You will ſay, *hee was of a ſtrong conſtitution*, and being alſo accuſtomed thereto, was better able to beare it: Yet there is a woe to them, that *are ſtrong to drinke wine*, and the more ſtrength herein, the greater ſinne: becauſe it is an occaſion *to draw others* into the ſame exceſſe with vs. *But you will ſay*, this King was carefull to preuent this ſinne, in others, becauſe hee made an order, that none ſhould bee compelled, and therefore not likely to be guilty thereof. As if ſo bee prophane Kings are not exempted from their lawes, and by their examples allow that, which their law condemneth. If you ſay, he might be merry with wine, and yet not bee drunke. I would thinke

Obſ. 24. Markes of drunkeneſſe. Eſay 5. *Obiect.* Eſay 5. *Anſ.* *Obiect.* *Anſ.* *Obiect.* *Anſ.*

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ſo to, if I knew not there were *degrees in drunkennesſe*, among the which though ſome may extenuate the ſame in the eye of the world, yet they do truly agrauate the ſame by the effects thereof. For had it not beene better for this Wine-bibber to haue bin *beaſtly* or *dead-drunke* (as we ſay) not able to haue ſpoken, or known any thing, then ſo to be merry-drunke as to be mad with reaſon. For what greater madneſſe could there bee, then to call for his Queene to make ſhew of her beauty to ſuch a whitled cõpany, whoſe *heads being ful of wine* their *eyes muſt needs be ful of adulterie*, and ſo for the ſatiſfying of their luſts, might haue had their *hands ful of blood*, and not vnlikely to haue indangered the life of ỹ King him-ſelfe? And was not wine a mocker & ſtrong drink raging? When for ſo ſmal an offence, as not to come at ſuch an vnſeaſonable an occaſion, this beautifull ſpouſe was vtterly *repudiate*, and ſo his merry draughts de-

Obiect. priues him of the chiefe meanes of his contentment: *if you ſay* this was done, not without reſpect of his eſtate, becauſe *he ſent (ſeauen of his chiefe Princes)* for the Queenes more honourable conuoy: and therfore it may ſeeme hee knew

Anſ. what he did, and kept *decorum* herein; Surely (I take it) this rather bewraies the ſtrength of his intemperancie, who being not inflamed with wine, was therby ſo impotently inraged with luſts, that he muſt needs (preſently) feed his eie

Obſ. 25. at leaſt with the obiect therof. Out of w we may obſerue,

Prophane perſons abuſe their wiues to be only baites of luſt. V. 11. 1 Cor. 7. *the beſt vſe that prophãe great ones, make of their wiues, which is to pranke them vp that they may be baits of luſts to others, (the people and Princes muſt ſee her beauty)* to vſe them at their pleaſure for the ſatiſfying of their luſts, heres no ſeperation with conſent, to the contentmẽt of both; for ỹ king hath his change, & the poore Queene muſt be defrauded, ſhe muſt ſtand at reuerſion & come when he ſends for hir, and he wil not ſend but to ſatiſfie his luſt, her deſire muſt be ſubiect to his luſt; but he wil not giue hir due beneuolẽce, ſhe muſt come to be ſeen to feed ỹ eie with luſt, when happily ther was no ſtrength to yeeld nature his due, or if there were ſtrength, yet ỹ ſtrange woman ſhould haue it.

Thus

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Thus wiues are kept fasting, to be lookt vppon as babies, when harlots depriue them of the crown of marriage: Thus marriage is dishonoured, and sin hereby ripened, and the wicked many times beaten by their owne rod: their babies oftentimes, make them beasts, and so paie their debts.

Theſe ordinary harmes may proue excellent inſtructions both in the *choyce of our wiues*, and in the *vſe of them*. *Obſ.* 26. of the choyce of wiues how.

That wee chooſe not onely for *beauty*, as being a broker to luſt, and haruinger to ſhame, and at the beſt cannot laſt out our loues; Neither *make ritches our marke*, which is in this caſe no better then fuell to ſinne, but that our principall aime in the choyce of a wife be *the feare of God*, baited with the other meanes, *Not matching with Poperie*, in hope to conuert, but fearing rather, that it will peruert vs, *neither refuſing religion*, ſimply without the other complements: *but reſpecting wiſely ſome equalitie of age*, leaſt wee bee vnfitte for marriage duties, when they are moſt required at our handes, and *eſpecially propoſing the inward* beuty, togither with it not reiecting the outward. 1 2 3

Thoſe hauing choſē aright, wee muſt further learn *how to vſe them*: ſo they may be truly helpers vnto vs: and this is performed 1. *by performing our duty to thē* and 2. by *teaching them, and exacting of them the* performance of their duties. How to be well vſed.

The point of our duty, is to *gouerne them in the Lord*, as *to dwell with them louingly*, and ſo to auoid all vnneceſſary occaſion of abſence, either from bed or boord. (A thing w the Law very gratiouſly prouided for, that at the leaſt the firſt yeare there ſhould not be ſeperation, though the affaires of the common-wealth did neceſſarily require it) that the *gadding of the wife*, may bee alſo *preuented*: a thing that may bring her within danger of catching, & ſo hereby *loue* might be happily *confirmed by wiſe experience* in each others natures.

He is to giue good example, to preuent much ſchooling: and he muſt *ſtrengthen* his example *with wiſe counſell* out of the word, leaſt he bee counted ſinguler, and ſhe more confirmed, not only to *auoid* the *euill*, which ſhe is ſubiect vnto 8

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but to lead her forward in the *waies of grace, vsing counsell freely but reproouing warilie, (and commending wisely)* not for *euery light matter*, vnlesse it *bee instituted*, neither *before company*, vnlesse they *giue strength to sinne*, but in much wisedome, and meekenesse, by the euidence of the spirit.

3. *Due benenolence*, must also bee afforded, the husband, *must bring in*, and prouide cheerefully, for her maintenance; but *within his calling*, and to *further in grace*, allowing *recreation*: but what may *further repentance*, and *imploying* her wisely wherevnto *she is most fitted*, by the gifts of minde, and ability of her bodie: so as to *keepe* her *from Idlenesse*, and yet not *to discourage her*: *easing* himselfe thereby of such laboures: that so hee may more freely follow his owne calling, and *honouring his wife* by that confidence in her.

The duties that wee must treach and exact of our wiues is, that *she reuerence vs* in heart, and stand in an holy aw of the husband, as being her head vnder Iesus Christ. This she shall shew 1. *By meekenesse in behauiour*, and 2. *Lowlinesse in speech* 3. auoyding *both grosse and sawre words* 4. And yet not sparing, *to admise*; yea, *meekly to reproue, quieting her selfe*, in mutuall loue, yea *reioycing her soule*, that she hath so good a steward and protector.

2. We must procure *obedience from them*, euen as Christ was obaied of his Church in all things, that is in *all lawfull* for Christ would command no other, and that *willingly*, and *cheerefully*, though it crosse priuate corruption. Thus may we rightly vse wiues. But as for *Abashuerosh* his vse is for lust; and lust is impatient.

And therefore, that we may see sinne wants not wit, for the speedy effecting thereof, behold he sends an effectuall message, that in his opinion could receiue no repulse, so hot was he vpon it, so wise to do euill.

Obs. 27. The wicked abuse Gods blessings to their damnation.

And had hee no better imployment for his counsellors, then to send them on such a message, which neither became the wisedome, nor their grauity? could all his followers attendance serue him for no better vse?

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Oh how like is hee to all thoſe happy children by nature who thinke the bleſſings of GOD are giuen them to ſatisfie their luſtes, and ſo to be furtherances to their condemnation .i. *But* I would the children of the Kingdome, were not guiltie of this ſinne, vnto whome GOD giues theſe bleſſinges to prouoke and further them in his ſeruice? That they were not hindered in the ſeruice of GOD by them? That they were not occaſions to plunge them deeper in the worlde? that *Demas* did not imbrace the world, and *Diotrephes* loue preferment? Surely if Natures fooles, ſhall not teach wiſdome by their experience; yet our profeſſion might leſſon vs to imbrace the time of viſitation, and to vſe our aduantages for our beſt furtherance to heauen: *To whome much is giuen, much ſhall bee required at their handes*; and the greater bleſſings abuſed the greater torments; not onely ſtored vp againſt the day of vengeance, but many times in this life inflicted vppon them: As may appeare in the caſe of the Queene, whoſe beauty is the occaſion of her ſo great miſery.

1 *Vſe.*

2

Obſ. 28 The bleſſings of the wicked proue their ſcourges in this life.

Wherein we may behold the *vſe and end* of Gods bleſſings in the wicked, as they are giuen of GOD to *fatten vp the wicked*: ſo for the execution thereof, they are *abuſed to ſinne*, and thereby *worke out ſhame. Their tables are their ſnares*, and their riches a *pitte to drowne them in*, their *wiſdome* is their *halter*, and their *honour turnes them forth as beaſts*; their *craftineſſe intrappes them*, and their *friendes confound them*, Yea the wife that lies in the boſome, ſhall pronounce ſentence againſt them.

Pſal, 69.
2 Sam, 12.
1 Tim, 6.
Dan, 4.
1 Cor, 3.
Heſt, 6.

By which wee may learne: As not *to enuy their proſperitie*, ſo, *not to deſire their full cuppes*, but rather *to feare this exceeding*, and be *contented with a meane eſtate*. But if the Lord ſhall caſt a larger portion vppon vs, wee muſt not *ſette our heartes vppon* it, neither be *puffed vp with the ſame*, neither abuſe them to ſinne, but to make *them weapons againſt* the ſame. And that, by *ſanctifying them* vnto vs by *the word and prayer*, and that *reuiuing this ſanctification*,

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9 10 11 *cation*, vppon their particuler vse, onely *to imploy* them holylie to GODS glory, *soberly* for our owne vse, and *cheerefully* for the benefit of our poore neighbours, that so we may lay vp a good foundation by them against the day of Iesus Christ.

But would these Counsellors and cheefe Princes, bee sent so vnseasonably on such a message? *Ought they not rather, to haue aduised*, their Lord, of the vnfitnesse and danger thereof; and so haue saued them-selues that labour, and their Maister that shame? Surely whatsoeuer might bee the cause of this their speed, whether they *enuied the Queene*, and so sought occasion against her, or, *were in the Kings predicament*, and therefore desired fuell to *their fire*.

29 *Obs.* Courtiers slaues to their Princes lusts.

Yet here wee may truly obserue the fearefull condition of Godlesse Courtiers: *Slaues they must bee if they will liue there*, and *slaues they will be*, to choose, so they may dance in golden fetters: *So corrupt are such Courts* to admit no other seruants, *so base is our nature*, to make choyce of no better Maisters: *so strong a thing is loue*, that refuseth no abiect paynes, *so iust is the Lord*, in fitting wicked Princes thus according to their desires; that so they may bee fitted for his purpose for their iust confusions.

1 *Vse. O pray therefore* for good Princes that they may commaund in GOD: that so glory bee giuen vnto him: there may bee peace among men. 2 *And pray againe I say for constancy*, and holy resolution, that so thou maist obey GOD rather then man: seeing hee, that *thus looseth his life shall saue it*, and hee that saueth it shall loose it.

There is no seruice to the seruice of a King, if still wee preferre the King of Kinges: winning or loosing we shall be Kings.

30 *Obs.* The Courtly life how to be accepted & vsed. Ioseph. Genes. 41. Dan. 4. 5.

Concerning the prophane Courtly life, as thou seest hereby, thou hast little cause to desire it, so if thou beest called refuse it not.

Ioseph was a Courtier, and yet remained the childe of God: *Daniell* a States-man, and yet faithfull with his God.

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God: onely remember thou which wouldst serue the Prince, what suiters and seruants will now haunt thee? Looke to bee *enuied*, if thou dost excell, and prepare thy selfe *to slaunders*, though thou dost neuer so well; Nay looke for *secret trechery*, to hoyse thee on the suddaine; and make account of *grosse flattery*, to make thee secure; here *ambition* will not faile to breed in thee *discontent*: and *lust* will bee importunate to discouer the same, *pompe* will here intice thee to *forget thy God*, and shewes will inueagle thee to loose the *substance*, *examples* wil allure thee to committe sinne with credite; and *priuiledge* will warrant securitie therein: *Gluttony* will assault thee, to make thy belly thy God; and *drunkennesse* will requite thee; thy glory shall be thy shame; *Idlenesse will wooe thee*, to bring thee out of fauor: and *company* will presse thee to frame thy selfe to custome: *pride* will exhalt thee, that thy fall may bee the greater, *And Prophanesse*, will make sure, that thou shalt not rise agayne: In a worde as the Courte is a true *Epitome* of the worlde, so in this little worlde looke for a worlde of daungers: And therefore thou hadst neede to stand vppon thy Gard.

Attendants on the Court.

Keepe thy heart therefore fast lockt with the feare of GOD; so shalt thou not feare what man can doe against thee: And *open it dayly*, by hearty prayer that God may more inlarge it: *Lette thy carriage bee humble*, without base assentation, and yet *secure* to preuent allurements: *Bee dilligent in thine affaires*, that thou maist stand before Princes, and *yet patient of preferment*, least thou shew thy selfe an hyreling. *Thinke no euill of thy Prince*, in thy heart, leaste thy GOD condemne thee, and *sette a watch before thy tongue*, that it betraye thee not: *Make a couenant with thine eyes*, that beautie doe not deceiue thee, and *put thy knife to thy throate* least thou surfeit of excesse: *Heare no tales willingly*, much *lesse beleeue them*, and bee not *prying into the estates of others*, least thou be quitted with vsury.

31 *Obs.* Rules for behauiour in Court.

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14 15 *Consort winh thy eqnalls* yet such as are of the better sort,
16 but *be familiar with few*, how soeuer *curteous to all*, *Backe*
17 *thee with some great one*, so his greatnes be in goodnes, and
18 *sport thee with such exercises*, as are Martiall and profita-
19 ble, *walke still in feare*, to keepe thee from falling, And *for*
20 *thy apparrell*, fit thy selfe so to the present fashion, as may
21 rather condemne it by careless frugality, then iustifie
the same with fooliſh affection, *And to* giue thee in fine
two summary rules for all. *Fashion thy whole actions by the*
word, and not by examples: *and prepare for remouall*, for
here is no biding place for thee: Thus being armed thou
maist safely be a courtiar, and that with such successe, that
at least, thou shalt *bridle sinne* in others, if thou canst not re-
Ierem.13. forme it; if thou canst doe neither, yet *thou maist weepe in*
secret for it, so though thou make others worse, yet thou
shalt be the better, because the more thou seest sinne rain-
ning, the more *thou shalt hate it*, and seeing the plague
thou *shalt not onely hide thy selfe*: but either with good
Hester, thou shalt *be a meanes for the generall good*, or at
Ieremy.39. least if the decree be gone forth, with *Ebodmelech thou shalt*
haue thy life for a prey.

Thus you see out of euill manners, proced good lawes,
these bad courtiers haue taught vs how some may bee
good.

Well, these *Eunuches* haue done their message, what an-
swer haue they?

The holy Ghost resolueth this in the 12. verse. *But the*
ver.12. *Queene* Vasty *refused to come*] being sent for by the King,
in this time of feasting, from her fit company of women,
to an vnruly company of men, and that to no other end
then the shew of her beauty, which was like to haue
proued a snare to all (*The spirit saith shee refused to come,*
at the Kings word). And why did shee refuse to come
or was it lawfull for her to refuse?

Surely how soeuer, it might bee pretended that it was
11 not seemely, *yet hereof* shee was not now, but her
husband

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husband the Iudge, (the thing in it selfe being not simple euill) though shee were not ignorant that the King was distempered) yet this would haue made obedience more commendable; and her Lord without excuse, if she had conceiued that this had beene against the *Law*, yet shee might know the Kings commaund, was a prieuledge aboue the *Law*, and though shee might plead feare of giuing offence to the King, who by this her comming might norish iealousie, Yet this being but supposed, and onely like to follow, was not to hinder a thing to be done. If it shall be graunted, that it was his sinne thus to command her: yet it cannot bee denied, but it was her sinne not to be commanded, Lastly if it shall be alledged that she had sinned in comming, yet it must be also graunted, that she sinned in staying. *Thus comming and staying* commaunding and not obeying (actions in them-selues contrary) yet proceeding from an euill hart, they all do tend to the same end, namely the maintenance of corruption, and dishonor of GOD, so corrupt is nature that it yeelds no good fruit, so deceitfull is sinne to intrappe on all sides, so vnsearchable our corruption to be discerned, so impossible a thing it is to wind out the same.

Ioseph. lib. 11. Antiq. cap. 6.

Obs. 32. The distruction and confusion of the wicked in their actions.

Againe wee may *here learne a duty for husbands towards their wiues*: they must walke as men of knowledge in the midst of their families, not controuling imperiously, but by good example leading them forward, both, prouiding for them things honest and conuenient as also giuing them due beneuolence, so handling them tenderly as the weaker vessells.

Obser. 33. Husbands duties to their Wiues. 1. Pet. 3. 7.

1 2

Thirdly here is *a duty of wiues towards their husbands* that they disobey not their lawfull commands as being subiect vnto them in the Lord.

Obser. Wiues duties towards husbands. 1. Pet. 3. 6. Col. 3. 1.

Well the Queene will not come, what followeth hereupon. The text saith. *The King is very angry, and his wroth kindled within him.* And no maruile, for as it is counted a part of generosity thus to fret and fume: so prophane *Princes do hereby especially keepe state* and their

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variety of blessings giues heat vnto their spirits and are as so many bellows to blow the coales, and if *Aha ᵛerᵉsh* were more vehemently kindled, the cause is apparent, his wine had enraged him: and his lust vnsatisfied did cast oyle into this fire, and seeing his commandement was also dispised, and that by her who of all should haue obeyed, this must needs set him all on fire, in that his Authority and greatnesse was thus contemned, yea he did well to be angry to iustifie his command.

Obser. 36. Anger and occasions.

Obserue we here wisely *the occasions of anger*, that so we may not fall into the like distemper: and *smother we it happily in the first sparkling*, lest it breake out into a fire that cannot be quenched, and see the *occasion be iust and weighty* that may moue vs thereto: For did the King well to be angry at so slight an ocasion? He had cause to be angry with him-selfe, for his abuse of Gods blessings, and horrible prophanesse: but to be so angry with his Queene, that she would not come at his call, this rather shewed, that anger was his maister, then that he recouered therein the contempt of his authority. *Moses* did wel to be angry, when the people had committed idolatry, so did not, *Ahashueroſh*, because his wife would not make an Idoll of him: *God did well to be angry*, for the neglect of his ordinaunce: so did not *Ahashueroſh*, for the contempt of his, *Christ did wel to be angry* because the cause was waighty, and he tempered his anger against sinne, with compassion towards the person, so did not this King, the cause was smale, and the measure immoderate: no place left for compassion, no hope of reconciliation. *Let not the sonne go downe vpon our wrath*: Sampson *did well to be angry*, to whet his couradge against Gods enemies, so did not our hot-spurre to enflame him-selfe against a silly woman and so to depriue him-selfe of his deerest friend. *In a word to be angry is lawfull*, so we consider. 1. the cause it must not be at *good*, but at things onely *euill*, and that properly an *euill* of *sinne*, (neither *naturall defects*, nor *necessary burthens*, must be cause of anger,) but onely sinne

1 Exod. 32.

2 Exod. 14. Marth. 3.

3 Ephe. 4. 26.

4 *Obser.* 37. Iudg. 14. 19. The lawfulnes of anger and it bounds. Exod. 16. 1 Cause.

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and that *committed with an high hand.* Gal.6.1.

2 Obserue the *manner* of anger, though their be waighty cause, yet we must *not sodenly giue the bridle to* this passion (for it is the part of a foole to be of an hasty spirit) but consider our selues, whether wee be now fit for anger or no, and so accordingly giue way to this passion, and then it must be tempered both *with loue*, and *commiseration* of the party, and *accompanied with patience*, and *bounded within our callings* least we breake out into reuenge. 2 manner Iea.1.19. Math.5.22. Mar.3.5. 2 Cor.11.21. 1 Sam.20.

3 We must obserue *a measure* in our anger, it must both *sort with our persons*, as lest guilty of that we are offended in others, and be tempered also *according to the signe of the person*, whom hereby we do humble, and it must *not onely end with the occasion*, but euen *preuent* the same to the better reforming thereof, because *where it resteth, it is in the bosome of a foole.* 3 Measure. Eccle.7.11.

4 We must be sure to *leuell* our anger *at a right marke*, the *sinne* we must ayme at, and spare the *person*, and it must not be the wrong done *to vs*, but that which *concernes God* that we must be angry at. 4 Obiect.

5. And lastly *the end* of our anger must be wisely considered. 1. not our *credit* or *reuenge*, but the *glory of God.* 2. not the *hardning of a sinner*, but his *breaking*, and *conuersion*: Thus if we willbe *angry we shall not sinne*. And herein sinned this King because he was not thus angry. 5 End. Ephe.4.25.

And therefore it had beene good for him, to haue repressed this causelesse anger, *by not giuing way vnto it*, or *turning the matter into a iest*, by *seeing a forehand into the euent*, and *considering in what case he was*; he might haue wisely wayed *that his wife was no fit obiect of anger*, and that she might haue had *cause rather to haue beene commended*, he might haue *not beleeued what report the* Eunuchs *brought*, or if he did beleeue them, *loue and wisdome would haue taught him to haue let it in at one eare and out at the other.* Thus maist thou preuent vnseasonable anger; Onely one thing the Holy Ghost addeth, which may seeme *Obser.38.* Anger causelesse how to be repressed.

to

to quallifie this sinne. Namely that vpon his anger, hee fell not presently to reuenge, hauing power in his hands, as furious husbands haue done vpon such occasions: but,

Verse, 13. *Hee saide vnto his wise-men which knew the times*) That is hee takes great aduise, in this small occasion, as if the state of his Kingdome were now in question, wherein (as I take it) he doth *increase his sinne*, not only by this deliberation, *giuing way to his anger*, which being now *silent*, was thereby *more setled*; and so like to doe more hurt: But in that hee calls a Councell, to determine of so light a matter, which might haue beene better decided within the curtaines, mee thinkes vnto his anger hee added extreame follie, disenabling his wisdome, and abasing his state.

Rom, 1. 1 King, 13. Ioh, 11. 48. *Obs.* 39. The cloakes of sin are occasions to increase the same.

Behold here the wisdome of carnall men, *when they seeme to bee wise, they become fooles, the fairer cloake they haue for their actions, the deeper thereby are they plunged in iniquitie*, and so prepare them to their greater distruction: because the ciuill forbearing, and bridling of sinne doth both secretly iustifie the same to their deceiued conscience: *and so furthers* the committing thereof with greedinesse; and securely increasing, and ripening the same, makes way thereby to suddaine destruction: *Whereby wee*

1
2
3

Vse 1. may learne aboue al things to take heed of *being wise* to do euill, either blessing our soules *in the outward bridling of sin*, or contenting our selues with *the shewes of vertues, but rather* to become fooles in the full discouery of sinne, that so being cast out of our selues, we may be cast vpon Christ, in whome of fooles, we shall be made wise to God.

Ierem, 4. 22.

2

See wee heere the vaine imployments of the greate Councellors of the world: The best that they do is to satisfie the lusts of their Princes, as whom only they count happy, and by whom only they are happpy, and the worst they do is to bandy against God and his Christ, whom as they know not, so his yoak they will not indure; vain men y are here said to know the times and seasons, and yet were ignorant of the time of their visitation: *Whereby the truly*

40 *Ob.* Worldly councellors how vainly imployed. 1 Cor, 2 8. psal. 2. 1. 2. 3. Luke, 12. 56.

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truly wise may learne their lesson, that as they must bee skilfull, which shall see the Kings face, and bee principall in his kingdome; so to imploy their speciall skill for the aduancing of Christs kingdome, least *hee count them his enemies that will not let him raigne ouer them*; and hauing first sought the kingdome of heauen, and the righteousnesse thereof, *as hereby they* shall best prouide for the safety of the Prince, whose crowne sits most sure when it is cast at the feete of Christ; so they shall finde godlinesse to bee profitable for this life; yea the people hereby shall fare the better; poore and rich shall dwell in safetie; there shall bee no complaining nor leading into captiuitie in our streetes, *yea which is the greatest wisedome*, they shall bee wise to themselues, in setling their slipperie state, and eternising their happinesse. *Happy are the people that are in such a case, yea blessed are the people which haue the Lord for their God.* 2 3 4

3. Obserue we here one marke of the miserie of Courtiers, that as they are brokers to one another in sinne, so they are vsually such as containe each others punishments. Queene *Vashty* no doubt and these had beene brethren in euill, and so it is their lottes to become her iudges. It being most *righteous* with God, *to make the* instruments of sinne the author of it punishment, that so it might receiue the greater confusion. *Obser.* 41. The misery of courtiers that they are contriuers of ech others misery. *Reasons* 1. 2

Vse. 1. *Whereby wee are taught*, as not foolishly *to flatter our selues in impunitie*, because wee are many partners in sinne: so wisely to auoide fellowship in sinne, and to *expect these as our rods*, who haue beene our brethren in euill; *comforting our selues*, with this gratious issue, that though *Assur* shall be *Israels* rod, because *Israell* committed fornication with him. Yet when *Israell* shall bee purged, the rod shall be cast into the fire. 2 3 4 Isay 10. Ezech. 23.

These councellors are here described vnto vs, *i.* by *their estate, and outward quality*, they were not taken out of the meanest; but from the Princes of the people, so (saith the spirit) *They were the seauen Princes of Persia*) men beside 4

their

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their wisdome, of greatest birth and ability

Obser. 42. Choyce of Councellors out of the Nobility.

A thing very fit, that such should be Counsellors; both 1. because vsually as they haue *the best education*, and so are likeliest to haue most meanes of wisdome, *so in that they haue power*, to countenance, and execute their councells, as-
1 well mighty to defend the Kingdome by their purse and
2 meanes, as to direct by their wisdome; therefore hauing
3 two strings to their bow, they are most fittest for this Office, *especiallie* in the choice of these, if here we consider that three daungerous enemies to Kingdomes are happily suppressed. Not onely *Enny* which cannot fasten on these, as hauing no benefit, but rather trouble by this calling, but *couetousnesse* also, which here is needlesse, where generous greatnesse comes from inheritance; and lastly *discontentment* is happilie preuented, if meaner should bee
4 aduanced and these Princes reiected; *Whereunto if we shall ad* the practize of Tyrants, which is to roote out vsually the true Nobility, and to aduance in their steed vp-startes and vile persons, wee shall find the practize of the good Princes hereby to be more Iustifiable.

Vse 1. By which, as that *Machiuillian* pollicy is vtterly condemned, which aduises Princes to let none grow great vnder them, much lesse to admit greatnesse about them; *so*
2 *Christian Princes*, are not restrained here their prerogatiue;
3 to aduance euen meane ones for their gifts and deserts: *the best wisdome*, is to mingle these, with others, if there be correspondency of gifts, that so both may be humbled, and better fitted to giue aduise, that vertue beeing aduanced may be more thankefull and profitable, and greatnesse being imploied, may bee more faithfull, and lesse dangerous: that the experience of the one, may keepe the others in breath, and the generousnesse of the other may preuent oppression and couetousnesse, that so *in the multitude*
Pro. 15. 22. *of Councellors* there may be stedfastnesse, and *in variety of Iudgements* more wise deliberations.

A second description of these counsellors is from their inward quality: It is said,

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They knew the times, and the Law and iudgement. i. that is, they had experience how to order things fitly to the times, and that iustly according to law &c. as beeing acquainted with the iudged cases thereof. Qualities very necessary in those that shalbe Counsellors. As being both the *makers*, and *Iudges* of the lawes, and vpon whose direction the whole state dependeth, which cannot be vpholden but by righteousnesse and iudgment. Verse 14. *Obs.* 43. Councellors ought to be skilful in the Lawes and customes.

And surely very profitable would those haue proued to the aduancement of Gods glory, if they had beene truely seasoned with the word of God, for want whereof as they were no better then weapons of the vnrighteous, so they proove as golden halters to hang such *Achitophels* withall:

A notable lesson to Christian Princes, that as they are not to neglect other complements in the choice of their councellors to be about them, as wise experience, and ciuill knowledge, and so especially they would single out such as feare the Lord, & aboue al things make conscience of promoting his glory. Which they shal know *by the gouernment of their families*, according to Gods words, *by the promoting of religion*, in the countries where they dwell: *by their conscionable vsage*, and gouernment ouer their Tennants, *and generally by their care to ease the subiect* of oppression, and to giue contentment to their power vnto them: hereby shall they attaine to perfit wisdome, which without Gods feare is carnall and diueliſh, and such wise men shall defend the Kingdome, and deliuer the same from all imminent daungers. *Obs.* 44. Counsellors such as feare God. How to discerne. Pro. 29.

Vse 1. Which as it condemneth, that deuiliſh position, which would haue state-men, *only to seeme, and not to be religious*, thereby insteed of religion setting vp Hipocrisie, & Atheisme. *So, in that the prouidence of the LORD worketh by meanes*, and their can be no religion without learning, and the meanes thereof. Therefore in the second place this condemneth their opinion, that thinke learning is not necessary for the gouernment of Kingdomes, as making men *to know their strength*, and so *prouoking* 2

them

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them to seditions and such like, as if mother wit or *experience*, or *traditions* onely, would serue the turne: the verie ground of Atheisme, (broker to tyranny) *Whereby* Christian Princes are aduized, to encourage learning, that their cheifest affaires may be wisely directed thence. *And seeing by this meanes God raiseth vp out of the dust*: and setteth the poore vpon the seat of Princes: Why should we now bee discouraged to imploy our Chrildren herein? Why do we rather put them to trades, and so empty the vniuersities; Nay the Churches of GOD? Is the hand of the LORD shortened? Nay is not his spirit enlarged in these latter daies? doth not Satans greater rage against it iustifie this calling? And is not our GOD stronger to maintaine. Where the oppositions are the greater? certainly howsoeuer our learning may not aduance vs to be Councellors to earthly Kings yet beeing sanctified by grace, it shall promote vs to Heauen, where in steed of Councellors, we shal raigne as Kings, with Iesus Christ for euermore.

Ioell 2.

It followeth, yet concerning these Councellors, that (*They saw the Kings face.*). Noting therein an extraordinary fauor, that was graunted to these Councellors. Namely that whereas these *Persian Monarkes* were seldome seene of any, vnlesse they held out the golden scepter; yet these had free accesse into the Kings presence, they might come into the presence (as we say) and see the Kings face.

Obs. 45. Princes must not bee strang to their subiects.

A very fit thing that Councellors should haue more free accesse to Princes then ordinary men, because they *are persons of more trust* and *imployment*: And yet, *not fit for Kings to be strange vnto their subiects*, and to count it a matter of state, to be rarely seene of them; *Wherein*, may a King 1 better shew his *humility*, then in being affable, and courteous, 2 euen to the meanest? *may not his wisdome*, bee greatly seene herein, that to giue contentment to his subiects, that desire to see his face, he in this respect shew himselfe more 3 open and often, among them? *and should* it not be as great ioy for Kings, to behold the faces of their subiects, in whom 4 consists their glory and their safety too? *And would it not*

quit

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quit cost, for Princes thus to be acquainted with their subiects, to heare some-times their causes in their own persõs, and so determine of them? do they not hereby *discharge their callings faithfully*, and *preuent wisely much iniustice*, which otherwise falles out. Did not *Salomon* and other vertuous Princes heare causes themselues? Did they not ride cirtuit to do iustice, haue they not had set daies to such necessary end: and haue they hereby exposed themselues rather to daunger? Haue they taken more vpon them then they could well discharge? Haue they abased their authority, and depriued themselues of their lawfull pleasures? *Nay rather* haue they not, hereby wonne the hearts of their subiects; and so their owne security? hath not their honour beene increased, by faithfull discharge of their calling? And their authority iustified, in beeing examples to their owne lawes? Is not Idlenesse hereby preuented, the very bane of Kingdomes, and true contentment gained, in stablishing found peace and equitie? And ought not this to be the chiefest pleasure of Princes, to procure their true content, in giuing glory to God by faithfull execution of their callings? Neither let them feare to be oppressed with the waight of this burthen, and therefore it must follow they must put it off altogither. *Moises* his president wil be a middle rule in this case, that so the burthen may be a pleasure vnto them. Not to make distinction of persons, as if the inferior were to base to come in triall before them, but onely the ritch who may corrupt the law, (for this may smell of Papall pride and couetousnesse, who reserues cases of such persons to his proper censure, because thereby he may picke their purses,) but onely of *Causes* reseruing the waightiest, and most intricate to himselfe (which may aswell be incident to poore as ritch) as hauing a more ripenesse of iudgment to discerne thereof, and in wisdome better able then other to determine of the same. Thus will Godly Princes procure their ease, in performing their duties, and sanctifie their honour in vnder-going the burthen thereof.

Samuell. Edger. Exod. 18.

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Obser.46. Tyrants their note, and punishment.

But what shall we say of this *Persian* Monarch? Surely as he knew not GOD, so he knew not himselfe, neither any thing that truely belonged to his calling. The *sword* was his scepter and *lust* was his law, *pride* was his *glorie* and *feare* was his protector, his *subiects* weare his *slaues*, and his *Princes* were his *beads*; And therefore no maruaile though he loued to be rarely seene, especially of the subiect, whose spoile he daily entended: if happily of Princes, but to be his *fowlers* for the *prey*.

1 *Vse* 1. *A iust hand of GOD vpon tyrannicall Princes*, by their pride and cruelty to make them hatefull to their subiects, that what they feare may come vpon them, and so they may be sent to the King of feare. 2 *And an excellent lesson* to Christian Princes, to keepe state by loue; and seeke glory in the discharge of their callings, that obeying GOD they may preuaile with men: and so establish their Kingdomes in this mortall life as to make them steps to the crowne of glory. It followeth. *What shall we doe according to the Law.*

Vers. 15. *Obser.47.* Wicked pretend law for the satisfying of their mischiefes.

Here we may see a shew of equity in this Godlesse Prince, though the disobedience of the Queene had much enraged him, yet neither in his rage doth he aueng himselfe of her, neither doth hee claime a priuiledge to do it contrary to his lawes (which happily he might haue done because the matter immediately concerned him selfe) neither doth he take vpon him to be iudge in his owne cause; but referres the matter to the iudgment of the law, and that to be scanned by the wisdome of his Councellors, wherein that he would not be his owne Iudge in his owne cause, but referres himselfe for satisfaction to the right censure of his lawes, herein if we iudge him by the outward action he did not amisse, his basenesse appeares in that, that whereas though he had referred himselfe to the sentence of his lawes; yet he should haue reserued both the exposition and iudgemen of the Law vnto himselfe, as being a part of his royall prerogatiue; these his proper rights he leaues to

their

their lusts who happily gessing his minde might hereby satisfie both their owne and his vnlawfull purpose, concerning the point that a man may not be Iudge in his own case.

Obs. 48. Whether a man may be his owne Iudge.

The equity hereof appeareth in this, that as men are blinde in their Iudgements and so cannot know themselues, so they wilbe likely partiall in their owne matters, as louing themselues to well: And therefore we must auoide all occasions of euill. And seeing we must auoide all appearance of euill, therefore howsoeuer it may bee, that a man may herein Iudge righteously, yet seeing to the world it will appeare otherwise, therefore for the approouing of his good name in the eye of the world, he is not in my opynion to be iudge in his owne case.

Obser. 49. How a man may be a witnesse in his owne cause.

If it shalbe here demaunded how then may a man be produced in his owne case to the satisfiyng of the world? the answere is plaine: he is not produced as a Iudge but as a witnesse thereto, and not so as a witnesse as if the Iudgement depended vpon himselfe therein: but seeing his allegations are confirmed by an oath, as being the meanes which the Lord hath appointed to end controuersies, whereby as he calls the Lord to be witnesse to the truth, so he conuinceth the conscience of the Iudge to assent thereto, therefore it is not the bare witnesse that caries the matter, but God & that Iudge they approue the same.

Obse. 50. How a man should be approued, when he stands vpon the testimony of innocency: contrary to the verdite, or report of the world.

Vse 1. This *vtterly conuinceth all popish religion* and proceedings, if they may not be their owne Iudges, but stand to the Iudgement of the world, and it *condemneth also the ground*, of that grosse opynion, that we may be so perfit, as not to erre in our iudgements. *It casteth to ground all pleas* for sinne, whereof few can hold, but from this *assumpsit*, that wee may and must be iudges in our owne cases (*whatsoeuer you say*) *I know it is otherwise, you know not my case, and if you were in my stead, you would thinke otherwise.*

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All which, proceed from this only ground; that their is no competent iudge of my eſtate, but my ſelfe.

A notable fallacy, whereby Satan deceiues ſinners; that becauſe others many times iudge wrongfully of them, therefore they conclude that they beſt know themſelues, and beſt may be their owne Iudges concerning their ſinnes.

A priueledge which how-ſoeuer they ſtand vpon, principally for this end, that their iniquity may be hidden from the eye of the world, ſeeing this is an eſpeciall meanes not onely to ripen the ſinne, but further alſo to harden the heart of the ſinner. Therefore behold the admirable iuſtice of GOD, in taking the wicked in their owne ſnares, that hardneſſe of heart, continuing impenitency, and ſo in the end working deſpaire: hereby it comes to paſſe, that they which would haue the iudgment deuolued to themſelues; that ſo they may not diſcerne the true iudgment of ſinne, it ſhalbe vnto them as they do deſire, they ſhall haue iudging enough, euen to ſinke them to hell, they ſhall truely iudge of their damnable eſtate, and many times pronounce ſentence againſt themſelues, and therein miſ-iudge of the mercies of GOD. And this is a third point condemned herein.

Obſer. 5. Wherein a man may be iudge in his owne cauſe.

If therefore, we wilbe ſafely Iudges in our cauſe, *let vs iudge our ſelues for ſinne*, that wee bee not iudged of the LORD: And that we may thus iudge our ſelues, let *vs bee iudged by others*, ſubmit we our ſelues wiſely to the iudgement of the word: and *let vs not neglect the Iudgement* of the *world*, if it iudge wrongfully we haue wherein to reioyce: If it iudge aright, be we the more confounded that our righteouſneſſe is cracked in the worlds opynion; only beware we here of deſperat iudgement, whereby we may exclude our ſelues from hope of mercy, ſo iudging our ſelues by the law, that we alſo ſeeke pardon in the Goſpell, that ſo wee may be eaſed of our heauy burthen. Thus being iudged we ſhall come to

Math. 11

true

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true repentance, and recouering againe the fauour of God, we ſhall alſo recouer the vprightneſſe of our conſcience, and ſo we ſhalbe able to iuſtifie our owne innocency. And 1 Cor. 4. 4.
thē we may ſafely not eſteeme to be iudged of mans iudgment, and yet not eſteeme our ſelues iuſtified thereby, ſeeing, as what the law condemnes for, is in our ſelues, ſo that for which we are acquitted is ours onely in Ieſus 2 Cor. 1. 12.
Chriſt; and though *our reioycing, bee the teſtimony of our good conſcience*, which we may lawfully cleaue to, and thereby acquite; yet ſeeing that GOD is greater then the conſcience; and *wee know not our owne ſoules*, and Iob. 9.
alſo that vprightneſſe which wee know, proceedes from the righteouſneſſe of our Sauiour, therefore as by the imputacion of his righteouſneſſe, we are onely happy: ſo to the ſame only we muſt aſcribe euen the power of that iuſtification before men, that notwithſtanding proceeds from inherent righteouſneſſe, that ſo Chriſt may be all in all. *Obſer.* 52. Princes are to refer themſelues to the iudgment of their lawes. Verſ. 22.

Well, the King will not be his owne iudge, whom *then will hee bee iudged by?* The holy Ghoſt anſwereth; by the lawes of his Kingdome: which generally no doubt did determine of the dutie of Mariage: though perticulerly for this caſe the Law was made afterward. Now ſeeing this was practized among the heathen, how much more righteous & wiſe a courſe is it, that euen, yet Chriſtian Princes (though in caſes concerning themſelues) ſhould refer themſelues to the iudgment of their owne lawes.

Becauſe, as they are of their owne making, and therefore it ſtands with their honor to iuſtifie the ſame, *ſo it is in their power* to expound their owne lawes, and therefore may lawfully make fauorable conſtructions for themſelues, according to the equity of the law: *Yea beeing alſo Iudges* of the law themſelues, and therefore may in diſcretion mitigate the ſame. 1 2 3

Vſe 1. Which as it condemneth the *groſſe flattery* and ig*norance* of thoſe that exempt the Prince from ſ gouerne-

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2 ment of his owne lawes, making him thereby not onely a groſſe hipocrite, but a very Tyrant: *ſo it iuſtifieth* that lawfull prerogatiue of Princes, which is to bee makers and interpreters, yea Iudges of their owne lawes.

Againe, this alſo reproueth the abuſe of lawes which
3 great ones breake thorough, and onely ſmall flies are
4 caught in. *As alſo*, that man of ſinne is here condemned, who hath reiected the law of GOD, and wil be
5 gouerned onely by his owne filthy luſts. Laſtly, whoſoeuer meaſure their righteouſneſſe *by example*, or *opinion*, ſtand vpon *cuſtome* or any ſuch like, *reiecting* the *law of God*, for the rule of their life, they are alſo condemned in this place.

6 Sixtly we are here taught to bleſſe GOD for good lawes, and to pray vnto him for the executing thereof; that great ones may lead, and the reſt may follow, and that (euery man may do as he liſt) may not bee heard of in our ſtreetes.

Well, thus hath the King referred the matter to the Iudgment of the law, and ſurely herein he did not amiſſe. onely in this may he be iuſtly charged of folly, that he kept not the ſword of expounding, and approouing the law in his owne hand; but vnwiſely puts it ouer to the determining of his Councellors. The reaſon whereof although we may partlie geſſe, becauſe he would not be rid of his wife, but with ſome colour, and other muſt do that which he would not be ſeene in.

Obſer. 53. Wicked Princes imploy their ſeruants in baſe purpoſes. 2 Sam. 12.

A matter vſuall in wicked Princes to deuolue the enuie of their vile courſes vpon their Miniſters of ſtate, by putting for a time the ſword in their hands, as *Dauid* did into the hands of *Ioab*: yet that this was not done without great inconuenience, may appeare liuely by their handling thereof. See what it is to put a ſword into a madmans hand; harke how *Memucan* the *Eunuch*, laies about him: *And Memucan ſaid before the King and the Princes.*

Verſ. 16, 17, & 18.

The Queene *Vaſhty* hath not onely ſinned against the

King,

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King but againſt al the Princes and people which are in all the Prouinces of the King *Ahaſuerosh &c.*

Thus, inſteed of a Iudge he becomes an accuſer; and the Summe of his exaggeration, or rather indeed accuſation (contained in theſe three verſes) is this, *that Queene Vaſhtis ſinne is herein exemplary*, ſuch as ſhall prouoke like contempt throughout the Land; among all ſortes, as pleading herein the example of the Queene and thereby taking occaſion to diſobey their husbandes. Wherevpon will enſue much deſpitfullneſſe, and wrath.

Obſ. 54. Sinnes of great ones exemplary.

And ſurely, in that he apprehends *the ſinne to bee exemplarie*, herein hee iudged not amiſſe. For indeed the ſinnes of great ones they are both patternes, and priuiledges to the inferior, for the like: *Who liue by examples*, and take heart thereby, ſeeing the greate ones ſinne vſually, without controulement.

Vſe 1. And therefore of all ſortes, great men are to take leaſt liberty in ſinne, *becauſe the eye of the world is fixed on them*, and *they ſhall anſwere deepely for the ſinnes of others*, in that by their example they giue warrant thereto. 2 3

And inferiours alſo may here learne their leſſon, not to pleade example, but to liue by the Lawes, ſeeing how-ſoeuer examples may hinder obedience to the law, yet the Law ſhall preuaile to the punniſhment of thoſe, that by the example of great ones breake the ſame. 4

Obſer. 55. Politicians in ſatisfying the luſt of wicked Princes prouide for their owne.

But that he falles to accuſe, where rather he ſhould haue excuſed, and in ſteed of healing the wound makes it farre wider: this howſoeuer it may be good for an orator, yet it cannot ſtand with the wiſdome of a graue Councellor. But ſome-what was in the winde: hee muſt needes, ſpeake thus becauſe he had his fee: the King was angry, and hee ment to ſet him goingu the Queene was an eye-ſoare, and ſhee muſt bee remooued. Such ſlaues are ambitious flatters to their owne and their Princes

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2 Reg, 13. 2 Reg, 11. Ioh, 18. Luke, 23.

lusts, but especially when their owne plow is driuen forward withall. Then the honour of the King, and good of the land must be pretended, when indeed they wil especially serue their owne turne therein.

2 *Vse.* This may teach Princes how they put such, to much in trust; *and therein also* to vse the fauor of their Princes more moderately, *not exasperating* them against other, least the foame light vppon them-selues, and their owne stroke returne vppon their owne pates: Their owne iniustice deserues no lesse, *and the iustice* of God shall finde them out in their sinne, *Hamans* gallowes in the end catcheth himselfe.

Obs. 56, Flatterers & malitious persons abuse Princes with whisperings and surmises.

But let vs a little further examine the truth of this accusation. Must all the Land know of this fact of *Vashty*? doth the country know alwaies whats done at Court? see here what a sandie foundation mallice groundes vpon, how flatterers abuse Princes, with surmizes, & scarce likely-hoods? Was this a sound argument to vnloose the marriage knot? Shall the state of a Queene depend vppon such dalliance? Shall a King be abused by if and peraduentures? Well wee see here that *a friend in Court is better then a good cause*; and it is an easie matter to finde a staffe to beat a dogge withal, (as we say in the prouerbe) Poore *Vashty* must be condamned without reprivall: and therfore the countrie must come in to giue in euidence against her, that happily neuer saw her by the face, nor euer had to doe with her. And yet the Lord had a righteous worke herein; *both to punish her pride*, which likely the country paid for, *and to punish the King*, who abused her pride, yea most especially *to punish these Counsellors*, euen in this their wrong collection, as hereby bringing this shame vppon them, that they were not maisters of their owne wiues. This was all they gotte by it, euen reproach and ignominy, & let all vnrighteous Iudges looke for no better; that in steed of qualifying small offences will set them on the tenters, to satisfie the lusts of prophane Princes.

Obs. 57. Euidence must be of thinges knowne not surmised and such as know the party *delinquent.*

Light out of darknesse,

But consider (I pray you) a little further the inconse-

quence

quence of the accusation, so that all the women of the Land should heare of it, yet must euery wife here-vpon of necessitie rebell against their husband? might not priuate loue ouer-rule a publike example, and wise gouernment of the husband preuent the like disobedience? probable happyly it might bee, that some might thus resist, which without this example would haue bene forward ynough thereto, but that all of necessitie must follow, this may discouer the Accusers blind mallice, but was no reason to inforce the poore Queenes punishment.

But here you may see when flattery and mallice giues information, shadowes are made substances, & improbabilities necessities, so deceiptfull is flattery, mallice so vnreasonable: and yet herein also the Lord is exceeding righteous, who meets hereby with other sins of this insolent Queene, that whereas no doubt she was an example of pride and vanitie more generally to other women, then shee was likely to be in this point; therefore is shee hereby found out in her sinne, and by this vnlikely accusation condemned of a true fault. Mallice and flattery vnfit accusers.

Well thus wee haue heard this *Persian* play the Accuser, now let vs heare how he plaies the Iudge. Thus hee shooteth his bolt.

If it please the King let a royall decree proceed from him, Verse. 19.
and let it be written among the Statutes of Media and Persia,
(And let it not be transgressed) that Vashty come no more before the King Ahashuerosh, and let her estate royall be giuen vnto her companion that is better then she.

Behold here the sentence of this vnrighteous Iudge, discouering most apparantly his folly and crueltie: was it not ynough for him to aggraauate a small fault by surmizes and improbabilities thereby to incense and so wrong the King, but now hee must sentence the sinne with so extreame a Iudgement, as had beene proportionable to the greatest offence? Indeed had hee duely aggrauated the matter to haue satisfied the King; and that the Queene might haue beene brought to acknowledge her fault, that so the King beeing Punishment must needes exceed the nature of the sin.

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beeing satisfied might bee inclyned to mercie, and the Queene heereby also fitted to mercy: Hee had shewed the part of a faithfull Counsellor, and performed the dutie of a wise Iudge: But thus to adde drunkennesse to thirst in condemning so extremely, when hee accused falsely, shewed his treachery in counsell and corruption in iudgement.

Iudges ought to be impartiall in iudgement, not to respect persons.

Only heerein wee may somewhat excuse him, and in this may hee be a patterne of righteous iudgement; that hee seemes to bee impartiall in pronouncing of his sentence, hee spareth not the Queene, seeing shee hath offended: and doth hee therefore well to pronounce so seuerely against her? For admit we the fault deserued some punishment? is their therefore no measure, but euen extremity? could hee haue deuised a greater? could the poore Queen haue vndergone an extremer? Is this to kill the sinne for the good of the offender, and not to strengthen the sinne by driuing the guilty to dispare? What then doth this Iudge plead for him-selfe to iustifie the equity of this his extreame sentence? doth he plead as Diuines do, that sinne was committed against the greatest person, and the thing commaunded being very indifferent, therefore by these circumstances the offence was more haynous, and so did deserue so haynous a punishment? or doth hee rather like a Polititian heereby iustifie the Kinges anger; by inflicting so extreame a punishment for the prouoking thereof? Doth hee as a bawde heereby make way for change, as happily smelling the Kinges purpurpose heerein? Surely though happily in pollicy hee intended both the one and the other, because rather then Princes must erre the subiect shal deeply smart for it, and Courtiers many times are glad to be such cooks that they may also licke their owne fingers: Yet in pollicie he hides all these and makes a faire glose vpon it, he implies that one must be made an example for the procuring of peace to many, better one perish then that vnitie bee destroyed: For saith hee,

When

When the decree of the King which shall bee made shall bee published throughout all his Kingdome (though it bee great) all the women shall giue their husbands honour both great and small. Vers. 20.

Heere wee may see the height of his wisdome, hee prouides for him-selfe, and his like, that they may haue honour of their wiues. But for his Lord and maister hee must haue no honour from his, but rather he must be dishonoured, In putting her off vppon so slight a cause, and the miserable Queene must bee dishonoured also, and that with apparant wrong and eternall contumely. So cunning are Politicians to secure them-selues with the dishonour of their princes: So foolish are such Princes thus to bee ledde by the nose by them, so righteous is the Lord to make the one here by a rodde vnto the other, that Politicians hereby growing insolent and great, are catcht in their mouth and so emptied in, their Princes, as beeing spunges to fill them-selues with the spoyles of others, that they may afterwards wring them out at their pleasure. Worldlings prefer the priuate before the publike good.

Thus you see the depth of his councell, and yet behold what a goodly vaile he hath to cast ouer it: *The woman shall giue honour.* As if hee had said that they being made ewise by the Queenes punishment would hereafter not dare but honour their husbandes, least they also bee subiect to the like censure. Doe you not see what a maske heere is to couer his crueltie? It is good saith hee that some should bee made examples to keepe other in awe, and therefore let *Vashti* smart soundly for it, that all wee may liue more peaceably. Wicked haue glorious clokes for euill purposes.

A most righteous thing that some should bee made examples, and yet the Queene might well haue beene spared out of the number of those some, if her fault would not, yet her state at least should haue priuiledged her, euery small fault must not make an example, though exemplarie Iustice bee profitable for others. But shall it bee graunted, that this example would bee profitable Exemplary Iustice when to be vsed.

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Terror no breeder of true loue.

profitable? will terror breed true loue and can there be honour without loue. Well therefore might this *Persian* hereby dominere ouer his wife bouldly, well might shee crouch for feare and play the hipocrite with him, well might she flatter him in his sinne and further him to hell, as being all the honour that carnall men looke for of their wiues, but true honour will neuer bee yeelded by terror, flatttery is not loue, nor soothing true submission: So that howsoeuer, in other cases this course might haue had successe, yet in this case betweene man and wife a farre better might haue beene taken. Namely to haue laboured with the King to bee reconciled to his wife. Oh this example of mercy had beene more vndoubtedly profitable.

Vse 1. *So let vs* make vp the breach, and not set it more open. *Let our censures* ayme at the sinne for the recouery of the partie, *and let charity* couer especially small offences, *build* we not vpon surmizes to cast away life, least we exalt our selues by the fall of others. *Aboue all* things keepe we holy and inuiolable the marriage bed, and *let* onely the defiling thereof be the cause of perpetuall seperation: as for such ordinary breaches as are betwixt man and wife, let vs compose them wisely among our selues. Is their none wiser then other, that we must beray our owne nests, and discouer our weakenesse abroad that wee may be snared with our owne infirmities? Had *Ahasuerosh* beene wise the matter needed not to haue gone any further, and then his Princes had spared that labour and he had escaped this dishonor: yea the miserable Queene had not thus wickedly beene diuorsed: But as it seemed the King was set vpon it, and therefore no sooner had *Mauncan* pronounced the sentence without demurre or the matter, or delay of the execution: but the holie Ghost addeth that. *The saying pleased the King and the Princes.*

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Math. 19.

Verse 21. Wicked Princes easily yeelde to counsell.

So hard are wicked Princes to be pleased with good Councell: and so easily doe they embrace euen that which

which is pernicious. But how ſhall it appeare the Kinge was pleaſed here-with: It followeth becauſe hee ratifies the ſentence pronounced: Hee did (ſayth the ſpirit) *According to the word of Menuchan*, and to ſhew his willingneſſe therein, leaſt after-witte might croſſe it, hee ſendes his lawes throughout all the Prouinces to this effect, *That euery man ſhould beare rule in his owne houſe*: And that the law concerning all, each might take notice of it. *It muſt bee publiſhed in the Language of that ſame people.* That ſo the lawe beeing publiſhed might not afterward (euen for his credite) be abrogated. Verſ. 22.

But what might bee the cauſe of all this haſte? Surely lette vs heere looke vp to GOD and the matter will bee cleared. The Church of GOD was like to bee in extremitie, and delaie was dangerous. *Heſter* was to bee aduanced that ſhee might be meanes of deliuerance, and therefore *Vaſhty* muſt bee depriued of her Regall dignitie, that ſo according to the ſentence, her royall eſtate might be giuen to her companion that was better then ſhee. So doe the wicked therein fulfill the will of GOD wherein they doe agaynſt his will, and in their wickedneſſe are his righteous inſtruments that hee may haue the glorie in bringing light out of darkeneſſe, and they might confounded in their owne malitiouſneſſe: Whereby wee may learne in all ſuch Accidentes, as principally to looke vp to GOD in the vſe of ſuch inſtruments, ſo not to iuſtefie the inſtrument though well vſed of the LORD, nor to condemne the LORD for the obliquitie of the inſtrument, but wiſely here to diſcerne betweene thinges that differ, giuing God the prerogatiue of his prouidence; euen to vſe euill wiſely, and humbling man in his pride that hee ſerues GODS turne heerein wickedly. Wicked inſtruments of fulfilling of gods righteous wil in their puniſhments for his glory and the good of the Church.

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And

And therefore let not *Memucan* bragge that he had caſt out *Vaſhty*. Nor let *Ahaſhueroſh* boſt that he hath done his will.

Acts.4. Pſal.75. Luk.1. Promotion from God. 1 2

No they did no more herein then God had appointed, it was the Lord that aduanced *Vaſhty*, and it was he alone that did caſt downe the proud from their ſeate. It is the Lord that ſeteth vp, and hee onely caſts downe, hee onely will haue the glory, neither will hee giue it to any other.

Eſay.42. 1 2 3 4

And therefore let noe mans heart faile him, becauſe with God nothing is impoſſible. If he caſt downe who then can lift vp, if he do aduaunce who then ſhall caſt downe, aboue all things therefore make we ſure of him, that vp or downe we may ſtand or fall vnto him.

Iob.12. Proſperity of the wicked momentany. Athalia. Iezabel. Achab. 1 2 3 4 5 6

And is Vaſhty ſo ſuddenly downe that was ſo late aloft? is the proſperity of the wicked ſo flitting and momentany, that ſo GOD may be more exalted and they much more confounded, ſhall the wicked be abaſed that the Godly may come in their ſtead? and euen in this life will the Lord make ſome of them examples of his power and prouidence to condeme their Atheisme and confound their ſecurity. Oh then let iuſtice here learne to haue no reſpect of perſons, let great ones know that the law is aboue them, and let the inferior feare ſeeing the greateſt are ſmitten; let no man promiſe ſetled happineſſe, vnto himſelfe in this life, nay let no wiſe man ſet his heart vpon this preſent happineſſe, Let the falls of the wicked teach vs to get ſure footing in faith where we ſhall neuer be remoued but be euer had in remembrance, and ſeeing we haue here no abiding Citty, ſeeke we diligently after that which is aboue, that ſo wee may be receiued into euerlaſting habitations.

Pſa.125. 4

Laſtly conſider wee wiſely the Tenor of the decree: Namely, *That euery man ſhould beare rule in his houſe.*

Here then you ſee the ſcope and drift of the law, namely to eſtabliſh a comely order in the Oeconomical gouernment

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ment that the head may rule and the rest may obey.

Thus euell examples are the occasions of good lawes and euen the wicked when they satisfie their lusts, subscribe vnto the righteous law of God, For howsoeuer no doubt the law proceeded from lust, and could not chuse but redound to the shame of the lawgiuers who were not lawes to them-selues neither could rule their familes and therefore they must haue a law to force this obedience and it is a miserable obedience which is onely forced by the law, yea if we consider the nature of this prophane people to apt of it selfe to Lord it ouer the weaker, and therefore needed rather a bridle to curbe their tirany, then any warrant to make good their imperiousnesse, therefore to them the law was not seasonable, (so wisely ought lawes to be fitted to the state and conditions of the people) yet if we shal consider the matter of the law in it selfe, as it hath it ground out of the law of nature so is it warranted also by the word of God. For doth not the law of nature inforce no lesse, then that they which are best able by reason of their different strength; they which deserue best, as being the prouiders for the family, they which must defend all and so shall answer for all, that they I say should haue the preheminence. And doth not the word of GOD iustifie this law of nature which giues vnto man the superiority ouer the wife, and that not onley in the time of mans fall, as if before they were one flesh, and therefore no difference of superiority betweene them (as if this superiority were only a part of his or the wiues punishment:) but also in the time of his restitution by Christ; thereby iustifying the holy right thereof, and approuing the same to be a speciall blessing: Wherein we may behold an admirable prouidence of God, that how-soeuer this law of superioritie concerned euen the state of innocencie, because euen to that happy condition this holy subiection was necessary: Yet is not this law giuen all y fal of man, because then there was necessary vse therof in regard

Wicked in their sinnes serue Gods righteous will.

1. Sam. Num. 24.

Husbands are to rule ouer their wiues.

1. Vse.

Gen. 2.

Gen. 3.

Ephe. 5, Col 3, 1. Tim 2.

1. Cor. 11.

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in regard of ſin that now had taken footing, which though it giue no way to proud inſulting & imperious behauiour, much leſſe allow power of bitter ſpeaking, cruel correction, or iudiciall proceeding in the caſe of life, becauſe though the husband bee a King in his familie, yet his kingdome is but ſpirituall, and for temporall reformations ſubiect to the Temporall ſword: no otherwiſe to take the ſame into his hand then by ſpeciall warrant from the ciuill Magiſtrate: yet it eſtabliſheth ſuch a power ouer the wife as Chriſt hath ouer his Church, if to cal *Peter* Sathan when he ſinnes of ignorance, then much more to reproue ſharpely preſumtious ſinnes; that God may be iuſtified and ſinne aſhamed, & repentance being renued may be the reuiuing of loue: as treading loue vnder foote in regard of Gods glory in the aduancing thereof, confirming our affections, which as yet condemne the baſnes of ſuch carpet Knights that proſtitute their dignitie as a baud to luſt, and become ſlaues to their wiues for a little dalliance: ſo hereby wee may learne alſo for concluſion in this point, to giue God his right and ſuperioritie ouer vs in a happy conqueſt of our rebellious affections, that ſo wee may retayne our dignitie ouer our wiues. Had theſe prophane men learned this leſſon they had not needed a law to haue procured this dignitie. But for want hereof euen their law they thinke ſcarce ſtrong ynough, and therefore they indeauour to ſtrengthen it with a further pollicy. Namely, 1 *They cauſe it to be publiſhed in the* ſeuerall language of each Nation, that ſo being particularly vnderſtood, it might appeare more authenticall, and being hereby intended as waighty, & in good erneſt it might both more eaſily procure obedience and ſo take away the hatred from the law-giuers. For ſeeing no doubt the repudiating of the Queene for ſo ſmall a matter, muſt needs heare odious in the eares of the ſubiects, therefore to qualifie this hatred the people muſt bee gratified, and (wherein thinke theſe wiſe-men) ſhall wee gratifie them better then by giuing them power to domineere ouer their wiues; ſo that now though they vſe them neuer ſo contemptuouſly

And how far

Math. 16.

Wicked iuſtifie their ſin by making it common to others.

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temtuously yet this law shall stop their mouthes, and so tyranny shall increase from the highest to the lowest, wronging and repudiating what shall not now be lawfull. So politicke are great ones to cloake their owne sinnes, by making them common, and so iustifiable in others: So wisely doth the Lord confound them in this their pollicie ẏ while by this communicating of the law to either, they prouide for their credits, they doe not hereby discouer their shame but by this meanes also ripening sinne generally they prepare the way to Gods generall iudgements.

Vse. Well howsoeuer the drift of these politickes might herein be wicked in publishing these lawes thus to catch in their mother tongue, yet is there an equitie in this point ẏ may teach vs many good lessons.

Namely seeing lawes are published in such a language that they may be knowne to all; therefore as no man may clayme priuiledge beyond the law, so we are hereby taught to be acquainted with the lawes, not to intrap others or defend our selues from wrong onely, but that so we may performe conscionably obedience to the same. And if so bee we are to take notice of mens ordinances, that so wee may obey them, how ought then our delight to be in the law of the Lord that so we may meditate therein day and night, And by the direction of the same reforme our waies? Which as it condemneth that man of sinne who lockes vp ẏ law of libertie in an vnknowne tongue, that so not knowing the will of God wee might not care to performe it, so it may cause vs to lament the ignorance of the world euen in such places where the Gospell is receiued, and to feare for the fruit of this ignorance (euen desperate wickednesse) that the iudgements of God are not far from vs.

Lawes to be published in the vulgar tongues.

Psal. 1. 2.

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Argument and parts.

CHAPTER. 2.

THe remorse of the King with the power of it. *Ver.* 1. The corrupt meanes is vsed for the contentment of him: Yet very holily disposed and wisely vsed by the Lord for deliuerance of his Church. From the 2. *verse* to the 7. The intertainment of the meanes together with the preparation and approbation thereof, as also the consummation, in the marriage of *Hesser*. From the 8. vnto the 22.

Lastly the confusion of all this lollitie by a consequent danger, which notwithstanding is discryed, and preuented by the Church, for the good of the Church to the end of the Chapter.

After these things, i. (after the wine was out and the sentence past and executed against the Queene) *when the wrath of King* Ahashueroth *was appeased*. i. (That is when the Wine beeing out, and the obiect of his wrath remoued, the passion ceased for the time) *hee remembred Vashty and what shee had done and what was decreed against her.*

He considered both the benefit of a wife which hee was now depriued off, as also the small cause that had robd him of so great a comfort, & also hee could not forget the baseness of his Councellors and the wrong sentence that was pronounced against her.

After these things, 1. After that the feast was past, and the wine and *Ahashueroth* was parted, and by the decree of his wise-men his wife was departed; and so both the swell of his anger spent, and the lust therof satisfied: *After these things saith the word of truth, was the wrath of the King appeased.* And so this mad fit (you see) is ended: the spirit doth not say that he repented of his anger or that he laboured to make amends for the same but onely this, that his anger was appeased, that is, not forsaken as a sin, but only quallified, and

for

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for a time laid a sleep to be raked vp againe vppon as slight an occasion. Wherein the holy Ghost doth notably sette downe vnto vs the manner how the wicked leaue their sin or rather how sinne indeed leaues the wicked; not to cleare them of the *guilt* of it, no nor for the *corruption* of the same, but onely for a time leaues them in regard of the *rage* or the temptation, that so flattering themselues with the imputation of great maisteries ouer them-selues, as if heereby they were great *conuerts*, and beeing puffed vp heereby they may be drowned in securite, that so the sinne returning in a seauen times worse manner it may repossesse them more fully, and so their latter end may be worse then their beginning.

1 Ob. How the wicked leaue sinne.

Wherein wee may behold the Admirable prouidence of GOD, who giuing the wicked their desire that they shall haue their fill of sinne, doth by this especiall meanes dispose the same, euen by brideling some-times the rage of sinne, and giuing intermission to the force of the temptation.

Sect. 1. Gods prouidence discouered herein.

For as by this restraining them, he makes them more fitte for humaine society, which (if they should continew in their outrage) would not indure them, and so thereby keepes them from many legall punishments which happyly though they meete with the body might bee a meanes to saue the soule; whereby hauing occasions offered to pursue their iniquities, as they forslow them not, yet still either for feare or credit they are somewhat brideled: so the more the fire is suppressed the more it inwardly rageth, and thereby takes deeper roote in the vnbeleeuing heart: so ỳ to the wicked the outward ceasing of the streame, tends to the inward increase of the corrupt fountaine, which afterwards vpon occasion wil breake out with greater violence: And so much the rather is sin hereby strengthned, because by this stay of our sin, not only ỳ heart is flattered with shew of vertue, & so therby hardned, but as the falling of one waue is the raizing of an other, so the wicked are as the raging Sea foaming at their owne shame, *Esay. 4.8.*

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ſhame, the intermiſſion of one ſinne is the prouocation to another: That ſo by this meanes being plunged in all kindes of wickedneſſe, they might bee giuen vp to a *reprobate ſence*, & ſo make vp the meaſure of our vnauoydable deſtruction.

Sect. 2. A matter which will yet appeare more manifeſt vnto vs if wee obſerue the *occaſion* of the wicked in leauing of ſinne, which is not any *worke of grace* wrought in the heart, proceeding from the power of Chriſt through the preaching of the word, but onely ſuch outward accident effects the ſame: which inwardly reuiues the ſinne, and ſo ripens the ſinner to his iuſt condemnation. For either the wine is out, and ſo the *occaſion* ceaſing, the ſinne for a time ſlaketh from its heate; or our *credit* bridleth though our heart be good; either we *feare the ſmart*, and ſo we dare not be medling, or elſe we *are out of date*: and ſo ſinne hath left vs; ſome ſuch thing it is, either wee are *deeplier in elſewhere*, and ſo you you muſt ſpare vs heere, or elſe (as the manner of drunkards is) wee will not ſinne in gluttony, that wee *may ſinne deeplier* in drunkenneſſe. Nay to *maintaine inward corruptions*, as ſpirituall pride, hypocriſie and ſuch like, wee will ſimper it mannerly in the outward carriage: What ſhall I ſay; may not ſinne outwardly ceaſe *when the Diuell ceaſeth tempting*? And is he not vſually quiet where all's his owne? Wee will not bee *riotous in ſinne* that wee may longer hold therein: And to ſay the beſt in this caſe; though wee would runne riot, yet the *ſpirit of God* will *bridle* vs therein, though not for our owne, yet for others good, and yet wee ſhall not champe the bridle; but willingly indure it; the Lord not forcing the will, but leauing it to its rage, and by contrary occaſions iuſtly prouoking the ſame: For either the Spirit *beſtowes gifts of knowledge* &c. vppon vs, which that wee may put forth to the vtmoſt, for the maintaining of ſpirituall pride; therefore we deſire to bee reſtrayned from groſſe and open ſinnes. Or elſe *wee attaine to ſome ſuch* calling in the Church or common-

Occaſions of the ceaſing of ſinne in the wicked.

Prouer. 26. 20.

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Luk. 11. 21.

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Sect. 3. How the ſpirit bridles ſin in the wicked.

wealth

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wealth which becauſe it cannot bee managed with credit if wee fall into foule offences; therefore for our glory and eſtimation we deſire heere alſo to be reſtrayned; and ſo are either kept, or not ſuffered *to reſt* in thoſe groſſe iniquities: Either the ſpirit *awakens the conſcience*; and ſo ſinne is ſuppreſſed, and for a time hindered: *Or elſe* on the contrary; *cuſtome deads the conſcience*, and ſo ſinne is quiet, becauſe it is not fealt; In a word, *either ſome rod is* our bridle that we cannot as we would, or our *profit* will not ſuffer vs to riot as wee haue done; though otherwiſe we exchange for a worſe ſinne, of deceipt or coueteouſneſſe: Either wee *reiourne* ſinne becauſe wee haue now no leyſure, or elſe wee *loppe off onely the branches* and leaue the roote behinde. Yea ſo impoſſible is it for the wicked to forſake ſinne truly that they are not onely ignorant of the chiefe ſinnes which eſpecially raigne in them, yea doe not vnderſtand the power thereof, but euen thoſe that they knowe they will not acknoweledge to bee ſinnes, either by *corruption of iudgement* taking light for darkeneſſe, or by the *ſhallowneſſe* thereof, apprehending onely the out-ſide of ſinne, and ſo the beſt they doe is but to make cleane the out-ſide of the platter. Thus you ſee the *occaſions* why the wicked leaue ſinne, as alſo the *manner* and *meaſure* of it ceaſing in them.

3 4 5 6 7 8

Sect. 4. Impoſſible for the rich to forſake ſin. Rom. 7. Eſay. 5. 21. Math. 23.

1 *Vſe.* Wherin we may learne as to iudge wiſely of al ſuch glorious ſhewes of ciuill honeſty, naturall righteouſneſſe, hypocriſie, and ſuch like which go currant in the world for true conuerſions.

2 So by the contrary notes we may iudge our ſelues comfortably whether we be in the faith or no.

2

And becauſe they which will liue godly in Chriſt Ieſus muſt ſuffer many afflictions; harken we for our comfort to that which yet followeth, the holy Ghoſt ſaith, the *Kinges anger is appeaſed.* And for the Churches good, the Lord ſhall ceaſe the rage of the wicked: *Ahaſhueroſh* ſhall be angry that *Vaſhty* may be diuorced, and his

Obſ. 2. The rage of the wicked ſhall ceaſe for the good of the Church.

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1.Cor.10.13. anger ſhalbe appeaſed, that *Heſter* may be aduanced.
1 So faithfull is our God not to tempt vs aboue our ſtrength
2 ſo mightily doth he bridle the rage of our enemies: ſo
3 gratiouſly hereby doth he ſeale vnto vs our eternall reſt and happineſſe.

Vſe. 1. And therefore why art thou preſumptious oh thou
1 enemie ſeeing the goodneſſe of God herein appeareth
Pſa.42. daily? Oh why art thou ſo diſquieted oh my ſoule ſeeing
2 the hand of the Lord is not ſhortned towards thee? Oh be
3 ſtill in thy God and truſt in him. For he will yet be thy
4 redeemer and thy mercifull God, and for thy eternall comfort ſtore vp this cordiall, that though God is not as man
Eſa.48. to thy hurt and confuſion, yet wherin man is good to thee, therein is he infinitely more: if a mother cannot forſake her child then much leſſe will he leaue thee, if *Ahaſhueroſh*
Zach.1.15. Eſay 54 8. ceaſe his anger that the Church may haue deliueraunce,
Lamen.3. thou maiſt then be ſure, that his anger will *not laſt for euer*, but though he hath beene angry with *thee a little yet in euerlaſting compaſſion will he gather thee againe.*
And for *they learning* yet obſerue here an other point, *Namely that as* thou woulds not haue thy God to be
*Obſ.*8. angry for euer, *ſo thou muſt* ceaſe from anger. So did
Anger muſt be renounced. here this wicked Prince and ſhall he riſe vp in iudgment
1 againſt thee? ſo nature teacheth thee that thy paſſions
2 muſt haue end, and wiſdome aduiſeth thee that anger
3 reſt not in thy boſome, thy profit will teach thee that
4 things may well goe forward and thy pleaſure will per-
5 ſwade thee that there may be peace with God and man;
6 what ſhall I ſay? if thou haſt caught a viper yet ſee thou noriſh him not, to ſinne is naturall but to continew is diueliſh.

Not to be iuſtified *Vſe.* And therefore ſay not with *Ionas* thou doſt well
1 to be angry: it is for thy credit who could endure it: Its good to purge choler and thus I will be avenged, foole that thou art; thou doſt not well to be angry, thy glory ſhall be thy ſhame, Thy Chriſt hath endured more for thee, and this ſhall purge thee of grace, and wilt thou

plucke

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plucke out both thine owne eyes, to plucke out one of thy brothers ? if thou wilt be aduizd by me feede not thy anger, but rather eaſe thee of ſuch a gueſt, as will eate thee out of houſe and home, view thy ſelfe 2
therefore preſently in the glaſſe of the word, and ſee what 3
a monſter thy wrath hath made thee ; a diſtracted head, and furious countenance, eyes ſparkling fire, and hands full of bloud, a mouth foming out thine owne ſhame, and feete carrying thee ſwiftly to the fruit thereof ; Let thy 4
feete therefore carry thee from the obiect of thy wrath Remedies of
and impoſe ſilence to thy ſelfe that thou maiſt reaſon with vniuſt anger.
thy paſſion, hold thy hands wiſely, leaſt thou repent at 1
leaſure, and looke vp to that conſuming fire whome thou 2
daily offendeſt, imploy thy wit and memory in recor- 3
ding the mercies of thy God, and this ſhall moue thee 4
to forgiue thy Brother, and remember thy end (thou maiſt 5
not liue an houre) and therfore let not the ſonne go downe 6
vpon thy wrath.

Surely if thou wilt not forſake thy ſinne by remembring thy end, behold thy ſinne ſhall remember thee euen when thou wouldſt forget it, and though the King (no doubt) would haue beene ſpared this *memento*, yet ſaith the ſpirit, *He remembred* Vaſhty *and what ſhe had done*. This ſonne of *Adam* is now called to account in the cooling of his paſſions and his conſcience remembers him of his former outrage : ſo wiſe is the Lord to ſchoole him in his better moode, ſo iuſt is he alſo not to leaue ſinne vnpuniſhed, and all this by the power of conſcience left in man by nature ; which though it *excuſe for ſinne*, as it is miſinformed by the corrupt iudgment, that ſo the ſinner might be encouraged to do the ſame, yet withall doth it *check and repreſſe* the doing thereof, And though it in ſome meaſure *informe* vs in wel-doing, yet it *accuſeth* alſo euen that very wel-doing, to the iuſt confuſion of Carnall confidence, and moſt righteouſly alſo *accuſeth* for ſinne, both to iuſtifie God againſt whome the ſin is committed, & by *conuincing* the ſinner ſo to leaue him

4. Ephe. 26. *Obſer.* 4. The conſcience cals the wicked to account in this life together with the vſe of it in them. Mat. 10. 9. 20. Iohn. 16. Rom. 15. Eſay 29. 13.

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without excuse, and thereby to yeeld him vp to the iaylor to be reserued for vengeance euen til he haue paid the vttermost *farthing*. Oh consider this yea that forget God and say the Lord hath forgotten, he is hid in the clouds, behold your conscience will condemne you for sinne, and *God which is greater then the* conscience must much more condemne you, consider I say you vnwise among the people, that looke vpon the wine in the cuppe, and count it pleasant in the going downe thereof, will in not in the end bite like a serpent and wound like a Cockeatrice? will not thy conscience write bitter things against thee? remember that for all this thou must come to indgement, and thy conscience shall beginne thy iudgement in this life, *hope* not therefore to corrupt thy conscience as if it should not accuse, *labour* not to dead it that it may not accuse thee; *flatter* not thy selfe when it doth excuse thee for sinne, *But* blesse thy God that thou maist see thy true face in it, *And* blesse him againe that thy conscience keepes thee from security, *And* keepe this watch true, by daily setting it by the word, that so it may tell true, and not deceiue thee, *And* seeing it tells true rebell not against it, though it be but a worme it will turne againe: and at the best it will so sting thee, that thou shalt wish thy selfe with the wormes. *Of all* torments most feare this rod, *and* yet of al rods sanctified looke for best issue of this.

Iob.22.14. 1 Eccl.8.12. Ioh.3.20. 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Obse.5. The particuler euidence of conscience.

But what doth the conscience here remember vnto this miserable King? surely she forgets not any thing that may torment him, she remembers him of his beautifull Queene, whose comfort he had now lost; that so he might see how iustly he was punished.

Now he burnes in lust, yea she remembers of that small fault which the poore Queene had committed, that so his sinne might yet appeare to be the greater in putting her away for so slight an offence, yea she remembers him also of those *base Courtiers* that had beene ministers to his lust, that yet hee might bee more vile in himselfe as to haue abased him to such *councellors*: yea she remembers

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remembers him of the *decree*, excluding her reſtitution that ſo this might cut his heart the more, in that the euill was remedileſſe, that the conſtancy of his lawes muſt make him conſtant in his miſery.

Thus you ſee the conſcience remembers with a witneſſe, ſhe failes not a particuler but ſets his ſinnes in order before him, and ſhe plaies the Orator to amplifie his ſinnes that ſo he may haue ſoure ſauce for his vnſauory pleaſures.

So doth the Lord of conſcience iudge righteouſly: 1
ſo ſhall the ſonne of God iudge the world; we ſhall giue 2
an account euery one euen of the things which he hath done in his body whither they be good or bad.

So may we beleeue that their ſhalbe a generall iudg- 3
ment when we feele the conſcience thus makeing way for the ſinne, *ſo* by this ſecret arraignment may we ſtill 4
be put in mind of that ſudden and yet moſt certaine iudgment, that ſo when our Maiſter commeth he may find vs ready. *So* by this particular iudgement of the conſcience 5
may we learne particularly to iudge our ſelues, yea to make the worſt of our ſinnes that God may make the beſt of them.

He remembred the decree] ſome-what more their is in this that he is ſaid to *remember the decree*, wherein I take it the Holy Ghoſt would haue vs to vnderſtand the maine bar of his repentance, that he could not make recompence to his wife, nor reſtore him-ſelfe to his right, which by raſhneſſe and folly he had ſtript him-ſelfe of, and therein alſo to diſcouer his deſperate condition that he is vtterly excluded from all hope of reconciliation, the meanes hereto is intimated to be the decree, euen that decree which his wiſe councellors had propounded vnto him, and he in madneſſe hauing aſſented thereto, cannot now with his ſafety and credit recall it againe.

Obſer. 6. The accuſation of the conſcience in the wicked an hinderance to repentance.

Obſer. 7. Credit in the wicked oppoſed to conſcience whereby repentance is hindred.

His conſcience tells him that it was a raſh decree and therefore was to be diſanulled: but his *credit* tells him that it ſtands not with his *ſtate* leaſt their ſhould appeare an error

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error in his gouernment (a thing which Princes will no way heare of; as they are peereleſſe in greatneſſe ſo they muſt be accounted abſolute in goodneſſe: that ſo they may robbe GOD of his honour; and he may lay their honour in the duſt) yea his *ſafety* tells him that he muſt not croſſe his Princes, nor antiquate his lawes, leaſt his Princes rebell, and turne the edge of the law againſt him.

And therefore in his carnall Wiſdome he ſtickes to that which was his beſt hold, namely to prouide for his credit, and preſent ſafety, as for the conſcience, that was but a fit of melancholy, and howſoeuer it might lead him to the hope of a better life, if hee would haue obeyed; yet being without that hope, no maruaile if he leaues the guide thereto and ſo makes ſhip-wracke of his conſcience to embrace this preſent world.

Behold the miſerable eſtate of the ſonnes of *Adam*! here is a Kingdome diuided againſt it ſelfe and can it continew? here is credit againſt conſcience, and ſafety of life preſent oppoſed againſt the ſecurity of the life to come: but will you ſee the iſſue? the leane Kine deuoure the fat, credit reiects conſcience, and preſent contentment excludes the hope of future happineſſe. And yet the Lord is exceeding righteous herein, who though he hath appointed to fat vp the wicked hereby to the day of ſlaughter, yet by this combat doth it appeare that hee puts the choice to themſelues.

Sect. 1. Gods Iuſtice herein.

Deu. 30.19

1

Behold I ſet before thee this daie life and death, good and euill, therefore chooſe life that thou and thy ſeed may liue.

2

Pſal. 17.14

Yea that they may the rather be allured to the better: behold the Lord filles their bellies with hidden treaſures,

3

and tries them thereby whether they will beleeue and ſee greater things then theſe: *Yea* he tries them alſo by ſome croſſes and afflictions, that he might ſee what is in their hearts and whether they will obey his commandments or no.

Deu. 8.2.

But all is one, they haue ſet vp their reſt, they ſee no better

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better, and therefore must make the best, of that they see.

Let vs eate and drinke for to morow wee shall die, they haue made a couenant with hell and with death, they are at an agreement, they haue made a mocke at the councell of the LORD, and for Heauen it is but a dreame, and conscience a bug-beare: let vs haue the present, and take the future who list, depart from vs Lord we will not the knowledge of thy waies, our belly is our God and we will sacrifice to our net. Thus God appointing, the wicked are the choosers, and is God vnrighteous to giue them their desire? 1 Cor. 15. Esay. 28. Psal. 9. Iob. 21. 14

Sect. 2.

But how shall the wicked bee confirmed in this choyce? how shall they blesse their soules and so harden themselues therein? do they not heare of a better within them? Do they not see a better before them? yes (beloued) *the conscience* tells them, that there is a better; in that it checks them in the best vse of the present: *Yea* their happinesse it selfe tells them that there is a better, as neither yeelding them any sound contentment while it is present, and taking it wings on the sudden, and flying away. *Yea* which is more fearefull, their heart leads them to the desire of a better. Oh that I may die the death of the righteous! how is it then that they will not vse the meanes thereto? how is it that seeing the better, and approuing the same, yet they follow the worse, and that with greedinesse too? surely the worke of the Lord is admirable herein and worthy to be sought out of all those that will secure their election, and especially wrought by the ministery of the conscience. The wicked how satisfied herein. 1 2 Eccl. 2. Pro. 23. 3 Num. 24

Obs. 8. The conscience Gods executioner in the condemnation of the wicked.

Which being GODS *Agent* in the wicked to accomplish his will, *the more* it is reiected the more it is enraged, and thereby prooues such an inward *hand-writing* to confound all their outward delights, that seeing they must now make the best of their miserable choice, therfore al the force shalbe bent *to corrupt* the conscience, ỳ so they may enioy without controulement the benefit of their choyce: 1 2 2

hence

Sect. 1. The falſe rules which the wicked deuiſe to iuſtefie their actions.

hence it is that the right ſquare beeing caſt off, which is the word of GOD, falſe rules are deuiſed, to blinde the light of the conſcience; *examples* are imbraced, and *multitude* is followed, *Time* becomes one rule and *Opinion* another, and to take downe the edge of it, that it may not cut at all, or elſe very dully, behold here they *plunge them-ſelues deeper* in ſinne, and giue the bridle more freely vnto all iniquitie, that ſo they may dead the conſcience and make it paſt feeling, which howſoeuer the wicked may attayne for a ſeaſon, and in ſome meaſure be free from the checkes thereof, that ſo they may bleſſe themſelues in their choyce, and thereby make vp the meaſure of their ſinne, Yet behold the iuſtice of God; when the harueſt is ripe the ſickle ſhall be put in, and who ſhall giue the onſet but the conſcience that was thought to bee dead: This doe the wicked ſurely finde in each *temporall croſſe*, and eſpecially they drinke deepe of it *when death ſeazeth vppon them*: The *worme* that neuer dies beginnes with them in this life, yea in their laughter their *heart is ſad*, and in the end of that mirth their is vnſpeakable heauineſſe.

Sect. 2. How they dull and dead the conſcience. 4. Ephes. 19.

Sect. 3. The conſcience how and when reuiued in the wicked. Pro. 14. 13

1 *Vſe.* Thus doth the Lord bring about the deſtruction of the wicked; and that eſpecially by the miniſtery of the conſcience: *ſo* vaine is it for them to reſiſt the power thereof, *ſo* iuſtly they herein renounce their owne ſaluation in preferring credit or preſent ſafety before the gouernement of conſcience. This was right the caſe of this miſerable great one. And this is the caſe of the wicked of the world that are prepared to deſtruction, their conſcience would retayne them but their credit ſayes no, their ſecuring for preſent happyneſſe excludes them the hope of eternall glory: and makes alſo their preſent happyneſſe to be moſt fearefull and miſerable.

2

3 *So righteous is* the Lord in accompliſhing of his will, *ſo in-*
4 *excuſable* are the wicked concerning their owne dam-
5 nation, ſo powerfull is the conſcience which is
6 ſlightly regarded; ſo mercifull is the LORD heereby

to

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to teach his Children to count all things as dung in regard of keeping faith and a good conscence, Phil. 3. 8

Obser. 9.

But may not a good name and a good conscience stand together, may not he be secure of the earth that secures himselfe to heauen? *Is not Godlinesse* profitable aswell for this life as the life to come? *Had* not *Salomon*, wisdome giuen him and ritches to? *And if* we do first seeke the Kingdome of heauen shall not all these things be cast vpon vs? *If wee* preuaile with GOD shall we not preuaile with men? *Are* not the Children of GOD of the best report? *Is* not wisdome iustified of her Children? Nay is not wisdome Iustified of her enemies? *Was* not our Sauiour acquitted euen of those that condemned him? *And* when the waies of man please the Lord will he not make all his enemies at peace with him, yea surely if wee could beleeue we should be stablished, and if we seeke aright we shall find the faithfulnesse of our GOD? had *Ahashuerosh* his Iudgement bin right he should haue here seene no direct opposition betweene conscience and true credit: but that as his conscience tould him that the decree might haue beene reuersed, so it might also haue well stood euen with his credit to.

Conscience and credit in the Godly go to geather. 1 Tim. 4. 8 1 Reg 3. 1 Math. 6. 33 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Pro. 16

For to examine this point a little in the Court of conscience? Why might not this decree with good conscience be reuersed? was it because it was a law of a mighty Kingdome, the happinesse whereof depended vpon the maintenance and obedience of good and wholesome lawes?

Surely, though it cannot be denied but that such lawes of Kingdomes ought not to be antiquated, which are expositions of the morall law of GOD; and thereby entend conscionable obedience thereto (such as the Gentiles are directed from the light of Nature, by the benefit whereof no doubt this *Persian* Monarchy had gained some) and to the Iewes were commended by the mouth of GOD himselfe, and so from them conueied to the Christians by the word of God: howsoeuer I say they

Obs. 10.

Lawes what perpetuall & how to bee antiquated.

may

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may not be altered becauſe they proceed from an immutable ground, and concerne eſpecially an eternall ſubſtance; yet other perticular lawes their are, concerning the times, perſons, and diuers occaſions of particular ſtates, which depending onely thereon, are to determine therewith. Amonge which lawes ſeeing this was one, as inſtituted on a perticular occaſion, and that neither warrantable, therefore in a double reſpect this might well haue bin abrogated, both in that the occaſion thereof was mutable and ſo the law might be changed, and alſo being ſlight and vnſeemly was therfore in equity fit to be cancelled. What then ſhould be the reaſon why this *Perſian* ſtate ſhould be ſo peremptory for the eternizing of ſuch lawes?

Sect. 1. Worldlings why earneſt for the eternizing of their lawes.

Surely, it is not hard to conceiue the cauſes thereof, if we do vnderſtand the nature and condition of theſe Kingdomes. Old *Adam* liues not in vaine in all his Children, he had a conceipt to be like vnto God, and this conceipt is the rather entertained of great Monarches becauſe they are bewitched with the peoples acclamations, *the voice of God and not of man*: Herevpon that they might maintaine an opinion of this deity in the hearts of the people in the making of their lawes, they eſpecially extended the ſame. Not onely, in aſcribing the originall of their lawes to ſome *diuine power*, as if they had no beginning, but further alſo procuring hereby an opinion of eternity to them, that they ſhall ſtand for euer and not to be reuerſed, and all this to this blaſphemous end that the lawes might be Aduocates to iuſtifie their deity, as being the daylie rules whereby their ſubiects were gouerned. From this conceipt of deity, proceeds vſually two effects 1. an opinion of *extraordinary wiſdome*, and perfection, and from hence 2 *vnmeaſurable pride* and 3 *ſhameleſſe inſolency*, both which were alſo no meane occaſions for the eternizing of their lawes. For what could giue greater imputation of wiſdome vnto them, then to make ſuch lawes that might endure for euer, what could be added more to their perfection then hereby to aſcribe vnto them that they could not

1 Act. 12. 25. 2 3

erre

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erre. Whereby they were not onely maintained in their pride, *but further* alſo hereby they became Maiſters of their deſires, not onely to yoake any of their ſubiects whom they ment to vnhoiſe, but euen to *bridle the King* himſelfe, and to make him a ſlaue to their baſeneſſe and ambition, as by this meanes taking the King at an aduantage, and thereby tying him (notwithſtanding his after wit) to ſuch inconueniences, as might not onely wound his conſcience but empaire his credit too. This wee ſee here apparant in this *Perſian* Monarch and the like may we ſee in his predeceſſor *Darius*; that which they take to be their honour, turnes to their diſgrace, becauſe they preferred with *Saule* rather to be honored before men, then to preſerue a good conſcience in the ſight of God.

4
5 Dan. 6.
1. Sam 15

Vſe 1. Wherein as we may ſee the iuſtice of God in taking the wicked in their owne Councells that ſo their glory becomes their ſhame: So we may behold on the contrary the great mercy of God vnto his Children that preferring a good conſcience before their outward eſtimation, in preſeruing of the one they obtaine the other. *Whereby* as the Children of GOD may reape ſound comfort euen when they paſſe through euill report, that at leaſt they ſhall finde more fauor, then he which flattereth with his lips: ſo it leaues a fearefull brand vpon al reprobate *Saules* that care more for the honor of men then the glory of God, that ſeeing God will honor thoſe that honor him, therefore all their worldly credit ſhall turne to their confuſion.

2.
3
Pro. 28.
4
1. Sam. 17
Obſer. 11. Vowes and promiſes what and how to bee kept.

Which as it may leſſon vs generally to diſcerne betweene things that differ and ſo wiſely to preferre our conſcience before our credit; ſo in the caſe of vowes and promiſes it may be a good direction vnto vs, how farre we are bound to ſtand vnto them. Namely if they be ſuch as are commanded of God, and do not exclude his ordinance, they are within the compaſſe of our power & greeable to our callings, if they be not forced from vs, but proceed from a willing minde, and tend not to the annihilating of our Chriſtian liberty.

1
2
3
4
5
6

Laſtly,

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7 Lastly if we haue power of our selues to make such promises, as not being vnder the tuition of others, then such vowes and promises are most lawfull and do bind vs, yea
Psal.15. though it tend to our owne hinderance.

Vse 1. Which as it condemneth all popish vowes and such like rules as neither being of things commanded but
1. Popish vowes condemned. contrarying the same, neither being in our power nor standing with Christian liberty, but being merely forced
2. Also rash and forced promises. and contrary to our callings: So it also reproueth all such rash and forced couenants and promises, which either being forced by our passion, or others threatnings, are not therefore to stand, because the ground was not voluntary.
Dauid 1. Sam.25. And therefore as the Saints of God, haue wisely broken such oathes and rash promises, so may we lawfully refuse
3. To be broken. to stand to such couenants, not vsing our liberty herein as a cloake of malitiousnesse, or deceipt, but endeuoring in all things to keepe a good conscience, and so wisely deliue-
And how. ring our selues from the snares of the wicked, who if they haue so catcht vs that by the law we are bound; then let
Pro.7.1. vs follow the Councell of the wise man, *humble* we our selues, sollicite we our friends, and giue no rest to our bones till we haue deliuered our selues as a Doe from the hand of the Hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the
4. How to be preuented. Fowler; And that being warned we may the better be armed, that we may preuent such cunning en-snaring. *Let*
1 *vs* not be seruants of men, nor *slaues* to our lusts, *keepe*
2 *wee watch* before our tongue, and *a compasse* according
3 to our callings, *speake wee* truth from our hearts and *labour*
4 *wee* sincerity in all our actions. *Lastly* to our doue-like
5 simplicity ioyne we spirituall wisdome, so shall we auoide
6 the snare of the Hunter, we shall not be en-snared with the
7 words of our owne mouth.

Obser. 12. The soueraignty of conscience. Lastly whereas the King though he hath a Law to cleare him, and a whole world to defend him; yet notwithstanding his conscience doth most righteously condemne him, herein we may behold the *soueraignty of conscience*, which if it stand with vs, we need not feare who

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is against vs, if it only plead against vs, what will all the world aduantage vs?

1. *Vse.* Whereby we may learne *as to feare* in our greatest outward safety, if the conscience be not quieted; so on the contrary to be *most secure* in the greatest danger, because the spirit of a man will beare his infirmitie. And therefore *as we* are to preferre the peace of our consciences aboue all the world, *so* we are to labour the procuring thereof though with the losse of all, as knowing that in the peace of a good conscience wee haue a *right* in all, and by the same shall haue that *to vse* which shall bee better then great riches of the vngodly, so keeping our consciences vnspotted of the world, we *shall be free* from the danger thereof, and hauing boldnesse *before God* in the peace thereof, we shal not need to runne to the world for a plaister to heale it soares. 2 Prouer. 18. 3 4

This the Spirit of God settes downe to be the case of *Ahashueroſh*; his conscience so woundes him that he must needes haue helpe, and insteed of such meanes which might haue brought him to repentance, his seruants aduise him for such as in truth tend especially to the increase of his sinne. *Obſ.* 13. The wicked in the troubles of conscience runne to the world & carnall helps.

(Here what they say) *Then said the seruants of the King that ministred vnto him: Let them seeke for the King beautifull maidens &c.* Verse, 2.

Lette vs drowne him againe in pleasure to driue away melancholly, that so hee may remember his iniquitie no more; and serue our turnes: *such* miserable comforts are carnall Phisitions: *so* wretched is our nature to indure no other Physicke: *so* iustly doth God fit the Physition to ỹ patient: *so* doth the wicked helpe each other forward to their deserued wages. *So* doth the LORD threaten that there shall be like Priest like people, *so* are Gods iudgements most righteous against them; when that by them is done in the hight of their wisdome which ỹ Lord hath appointed as the only meanes of their destruction. 1 2 3 4 5

Wherin we may behold as a special office of Courtiers.

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Obſ. 14. Courtiers plunge their Princes in pleaſure.

Namely to bee brokers to the luſts of wicked Princes, ſo herein alſo their diueliſh pollicy. Namely to plunge their Princes in pleaſure, vppon pretence of eaſing their ſhoulders of vnneceſſary affaires; that ſo corrupting their conſciences they both may rule them as they liſt, and yet by their example iuſtefie them-ſelues. And doth not the admirable iuſtice of God appeare moſt liuely heerin, that as by this meanes, Princes are more deeply drowned in all iniquitie, ſo they are more inraged and poſſeſſed with iealouſie, and ſo vſually ſtrike thoſe that ſtand next to them: *Or if* by Gods mercy they are at length reclaimed, who muſt be the ſacrifices to appeaſe the people, and purge the land in this caſe? Who muſt pay for their errors but theſe that haue bene the bellowes to ſet all on fire?

Ieremy. 8. 10.

Vſe. A notable leſſon for all Chriſtians that they daub not vp ſinne with ſuch vntempered morter, *neither* running to company to driue away melancholly, nor *falling* to gaming and ſuch like vaine helps.

The wounded cõſcience how to be releaſued. Ierem, 3. 13. Pſal, 32. 5. Ierem, 3. 36. Hebr, 10. 21. Peter 1, 5. 2 Phill. Epheſ, 6.

But that beeing wounded with ſinne, they goe to the true Phiſitian for the curing thereof, and ſo vſe the right meanes which hee hath preſcribed. Namely to, 1. know their iniquity, and 2. acknowledge the ſame with griefe, ſo to bee 3. humbled there-with, as withall 4. to ſigh for pardon, and 5. to beg the ſame inſtantly at the throne of grace; 6. offering holy vowes neuer to commit the like again; and 7. watching ouer them-ſelues by holy feare, and 8. ſoberly, that ſo they may ſtand faſt in the day of temptation. But let vs examine the beſt in their offer: Namely that the King may haue another ſpouſe for ſo it is ſaid: *That there may raigne inſteed of* Vaſhty. A matter very equal, that ỹ King ſhould haue a comforter, and the *light of nature* here taught theſe prophane men, ỹ euen a ſecond wife was not altogether vnlawfull: and ſeeing the ſame reaſons why we ſhould marry one, may alſo be in force to marry another. Namely, that wee may haue the comforts of ſweete ſociety; ſee the fruite of our body and auoyd

Verſe, 4. *Obſ.* 15. Second marriage not vnlawfull.

fornication:

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fornication, I see not, but the thing being simply lawfull to marry a wife, we may find euen all these blessings as well in the second as in a former choice: Nay if we shal consider that experience teacheth wisdome, why may I not hope to haue more comfort in my second choice then I haue had in my first.

Vse 1. And therefore howsoeuer this liberty may be the occasion of some euill dealing against the wife, (which hath bin the occasion why some haue beene straight euen in iust causes to allow of diuorce) & though this liberty be not indeed to be taken of euery one, but of those especially that may increase so the Church of God therby, yet seeing we haue the examples of the holy men of God for our warrant, & the word also doth not simply forbid the same, but by a consequent doth plainely allow it; I see not but this liberty may bee lawfully practised among Christians, obseruing no other conditions then are required in the former marriage. 1 Tim. 5.

That which is added concerning the speciall quality of the wife that must be chosen, *That she must bee picked out of the most beautifull Virgins*, as if *beauty* were the best marke to guide the eye in the choice of a wife: this as in it selfe is more liable to reproofe, so, though otherwise not to be neglected, Yet now in conscience should least haue bin entended, because beauty was the occasion of the former sinne. And surely hereby do the Children of God best testifie their repentanee when they dread the fire that hath so scorcht them, and auoide such occasions as haue bin fuel to their sinne. But what do I speake of repentance to this King and his Courtiers? heres no sinne acknowledged, and therefore can we looke for any auoyding the like occasions? No, no, their sinne is their happines, and therfore when ỹ former wood is spent, what should they do but cast on more to maintaine the flame: thus beauty must stil be supplied to maintaine lust. *Let them seeke beautiful Virgins*. Say these ioylie courtiers both shewing therein their chiefest aime, & not being ignorant what would please ỹ King.

Obs. 16. Beauty warily to be proposed in the choice of a wife.

Obs. 17. Godly auoide such occasions as haue enticed them to sinne.

Obs. 18. Prophaine courtiers ready to satisfie the lusts of their Princes.

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Vse. 1 Oh that wee could bee so wise to take notice what would please the King of heauen, as these carnall wretches are to serue the honour of this earthly Monarch, *that* wee could so further one another in the way to happynesse, as the wicked are skilful to fit each others turne to hell, *that* we could see our owne weaknesse to be humbled therewith, as the wicked fit each others corruption to the strengthning thereof, *that* wee could so know our owne strength to be resolute against sinne, as the wicked know each others weakenesse to help forward to euil: Surely if we do not, these Courtiers shall condemne vs: their wisdome in sinne, our folly to goodnesse.

Obs. 19. The best gifts of the wicked tend to their destruction.

Let them seeke for the King beautifull Virgins; wel fare then deformitie, for beauty bringes bondage: here's no seeking for foule ones, the faire must serue the Court; So doe the best giftes of the wicked tend to their distruction, and no maruaile: *For* as they are giuen of God in anger and not in mercy, *so they* are desired of the wicked, for they though seeming good, yet indeed are for true hurt & distruction. *And therfore* as they occasion the wicked to rest vpon them: *so because* these will serue the turne, for their present vse of the world, therefore they will not seeke after durable riches: VVhereby they proue also meanes to puffe them vp: And so they grow insolent ouer others, and secure of their owne estate. By which meanes sacrificing to their nets, and making y wedge of gold their hope, they become also *snares* and stumbling blockes to them and others, and so both hasten and increase their damnation.

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Pag. 13. a. That which wee may learne heere is partly touched beefore. But heereto we may adde these publike lessons.

1 *Vse.* Namely *as to* condemne the world for respecting
2 men extraordinarily, only for these thinges: *so* much the rather for excluding by these the more excellent blessings, as if so be religion were enemy to pollicy, and sound holinesse would not worke true subiection.

3 And seeing indeed these are common to all, & are rather

portions.

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portions caſt vppon the wicked to their greater condemnation: Therefore lette vs not be diſcouraged if wee are ſcanted of them, but rather lette vs ſeek after durable riches. *Let* vs not take paines and lay out our money vpon things of no value, but rather let them that thirſt come to the waters and buy without money, as being aſſured, that if wee chooſe the better part we ſhal not want the complement, theſe outward things ſhal be caſt into the reckoning. This ſhal be wiſdome, riches, honour and all vnto vs.

Thus farre of the quallitie by which this wife muſt bee choſen: ſhee muſt bee beautifull, the beſt pearle in a carnall eye.

But where ſhall we ſeeke for this beautifull wife? Hearken what theſe Miniſters aduiſe in this point, muſt we fetch her from other countries that differ in manners and religion from vs? No ſay theſe Counſellors.

Let the King appoint officers throughout all the Prouinces of the Kingdome, and let thē gather all the yong beautifull Virgins into the Palace of Suſhan *into the houſe of the wemē vnder the hand of* Hege *the Kings Eunuch, keeper of the women to giue them their things for purification.* Verſe. 3.

And the maid that ſhall pleaſe the King let her raigne inſteed of Vaſhtie. Verſe. 4.

This you ſee is the ſumme of their councell, why this wife ſhould bee choſen, and it may bee drawne to theſe heades.

1 Becauſe it is a matter of ſtate, therefore it muſt be done in ſtate; Officers muſt be appointed (happily a new) and for a ſeaſon onely for this worke, that ſo it may be done in order and decencie

2 Theſe Officers as they muſt not exceed the boundes of the Kingdome, ſo their commiſſion is large, the whole kingdome is their circuit.

3 Though there be but one to be choſen, yet all the *beautifull Virgins* in the Kingdome muſt be ſought out and gathered together, that ſo of them all this choyce of one may be made.

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4 They must be brought *to the place of* Sushan, neere the hand of the chiefe Keeper of the women; that so they may be sure for starting away, or at least loose the crowne and pride of their reioycing.

5 They must haue *things giuen them for* their purification, that they must be trained vp to the fashion and manners of the Court, and they must be fitted here to the state and lust of the Prince &c.

These are the particulers of this prudent Counsell. Now let vs examine the equitie thereof.

Obs. 20. Matters of state to be carried with complement.

And surely that matters of state should be carried in state, and affaires of Princes ought to haue complement accordingly: So that howsoeuer they differ from common men, yet this may stand with their lawfull libertie; both their *calling* doth require it, and their *meanes* will allow; and who may better be imployed herein then the subiect; who fitter then *Abrahams* seruant to procure a wife for his Maisters sonne?

Genes 4.

Onely obserue wee that the complement of state bee no cloak to sin, not countenance to secret wickednes. 2. ỹ ỹ matter they are imploied in be answerable to their seruice & the state whom it doth concerne, and 3. that the end be holy & profitable to the church and cõmõ wealth: which as it condẽneth the imploimẽt of many vnnecessary officers to base & vnseemly seruices toward prophãe princes, whẽ the subiect is taken vp for satisfying priuat lusts: so it is a good lesson to christiã princes, ỹ though thei haue the lawful cõmand of the bodies & good of their subiects, not to make them drudges to euery base seruice, but if the iust man bee merciful to his beast, then surely ought they much more to be respectiue of man, as much concerning their glory & their safety too, but of this point more largely anon. Nay if we consider ỹ compasse of their commission ỹ they must not exceed the limits of the Kingdome; surely herein they aduise not amisse.

Nerie, 16.7.

For seeing in ỹ choyce of a wife we should especially respect similitude of time, which is best discerned by agreement.

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agreement in the same religion, correspondency in manners, and conformity to our guise, and laudable fashion: was not his owne country likeliest to afford these, and was it not therefore fit to make his choyse here? To make him great and strong by forraine alliance, to vnite diuers nations by this meanes together: As this is not the fashion of Tirants, whose greatnesse riseth by the sword or trechery, so indeed Christian Princes are to be wise herein least *while* that they seeke for greatnesse they loose goodnesse, *while* they labour to be strong abroad they weaken not them-selues at home, and *while* by forraine matches they may intend vnity, it proue not occasion both of intestine and forraine dissentions. And therefore though in this case, it is good to leaue great ones to this liberty, which they will take and aske their inferiors no leaue, yet I would haue them also wisely to consider withall, that a little well knit together by loue, is better then a great deale scattred, and at the best linked together with vnequall bond, And therefore whether their owne kingdome may not afford such matches, as what they want in greatnesse may he supplyed but in faithfull loue, and ioyne that mutual fellowshippe which cannot be had in forraine matches. But what needs all this: are we not now in Persia? heathen examples must not be absolute presidents; they can offend enough at home though they choose not their wiues abroad.

Obs. 8. Where a wife to be chosen whether at home in our owne country or abrod.

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Else what need all the beautifull virgins to be gathered to Sushan. The King would haue but one and therefore what neede so many hundreds? And though he might shew his power, thus to ingrosse beauty to him selfe, because if he commanded who durst deny: yet surely this must needs turne to great greefe and discontentment of his subiects, thus to bee depriued of the staffes of their age, *and* also much frustrate the end which he proposed therein, namely out of those many to make choyce of one. For if the eye be neuer satisfied with seeing, and among so many like obiects the minde must needs be distracted; how shall he grow to a resolution which shall

Obser. 22. Tyrants how they reuell in the goods and bodies of their subiects.

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be ſhe, that in his choice is only led by ſuch a rule as makes no difference betweene the one and the other vnleſſe we wil ſay ỹ out of this multitude he ment to choſe more then one, though not for his wife yet to ſupplie the number of his concubines and wandring. *Dinah* ſtraying ſo farre from home might be good meat for courtiers (remember I pray you we are yet in Perſia,) groſer fare wil ſerue them: whatſoeuer it is, we may here behold ỹ miſerable ſlauery of ſuch as liue vnder Godles Princes, the beſt that they haue muſt ſerue ỹ Tirants luſt, there ſeruants muſt be his bauds & her daughters his harlots. Beloued, their odious liues and that which is deerer his harlots their ritches, their liberty ỹ deereſt of all their ſoules & conſciences, theſe muſt be proſtituted to the luſt of wicked Princes. *So* blaſphemouſly do they exalt themſelues hourely aboue al that is called God. *So* iuſt is the Lord to ſatiate the wicked with their owne waies: that forſake him to be ruled like other nations. *So* wiſely doth he make the wicked hereby rods to puniſh each other. That as the inſolence of Princes puniſheth the Idolatry of the ſubiect, ſo the rage of the ſubiect ſhall puniſh the Idolatry of the Prince.

1 Sam. 8

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Pro. 14

1 Sam. 8

Vſe 1. Which though it be no warrant *to caſt* of the yoake of gouernment, becauſe the wicked abuſe the ſame: *Yet* it is a good leſſon for Princes not vniuſtly to greeue the ſubiect by abuſing vnneceſſarily their authority ouer them, as knowing that howſoeuer their bodies and goods are theirs at command, yet it is in the Lord, his glory for & the publique good. And ſubiects alſo may here take out that leſſon, as principally to beare the Lords yoake, that ſo the yoake of man may be eaſie vpon thē; and to vſe theſe outward comforts ſoberly ỹ ſo for thē they may not be a prey to the wicked, ſo to be patient euen vnder a whip of ſcorpions; as knowing that all this is of the Lord, he it is that bridles the rage of the moſt barbarous, & vnreaſonable; he in his good time will giue a gracious iſſue; and in the meane time all things ſhall turne vnto their goods.

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Princes how to command their ſubiects.

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Rom. 8. 27

4. In

4 In that these Virgins must be brought into the palace of *Sushan* and as it were clapt vnder hatches, vnder the custodie of the *Eunuch* that had the charge of the women, the misery hereof beeing such as ought not to bee named among Christians I spare thereto to searching therevnto.

Obser. 23. The confusion of Idolatry and carnall wisdome.

Onely consider wee the power of Sathan in these Chrildren of vnbeleefe that as it was counted a great honor among those vassalls of Sathan, to offer vp the soules and bodies of their daughters in fire vnto the diuil; so to prostitute the chastity also of their Virgins to the lust of their Priests, as if it were a sacrifice most acceptable to their supposed Gods: Wherevpon also it came to passe that as their Princes affected a kind of deity herein to haue the spoile of the Virgins chastity, to be a cloake to colour their lust, so it was no small honour accounted euen to these to become the Paramours to so mighty Monarchies.

Vse Which as it doth apparantly iustifie the righteous vengeance of God against Idolators that they shall account that their greatest honor which brings both ceraine infamy in this life and eternall condemnation in the other life. So we shall see that the diuell is not dead, if we consider a like power of Satan not onely among Papists where this sinne is maintained; yea worse iustified by Papall priueledge: But, which (I shame to speake) euen among the professors of the Ghospell themselues, among whome drunkenesse is counted good fellowshippe and vncleanes man-hood, whoreing faces it with priueledge, and all iniquity hath gotten to the vpper hand.

Solemnity.

1 Tim. 3

Well the Virgins are thus appointed to be brought to *Susan*: here must they now be prepared and fashioned to the Court. They aduise is. *They must haue things giuen them for purification.*

Obser. 24. Natures infirmities to be cleansed and abstinence to be vsed therein.

That is such things as might both serue to cleanse natures infirmities, and also might set out nature more gloriously to the satisfaction of the lust of the eye, wherin that

meanes

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Deu.21. meanes are vsed to heale Natures sickenes: This in it selfe is a most lawfull thing *as* both commanded by God, in a most precise manner and *tending* much to the health of both parties, in that the disease is not without his infection.

1 *Vse.* 1. Which as it condemneth the practize of those worse then brutish natures that runne together at all
2 times without respect of natures preuelidge, *so* also this very clensing shall be a heauy witnesse against those gentiles, yea against all such in generall that are thus precise to clense the infirmities of the body, and yet neuer regard
3 the purging of the soule. *And* therefore the best of vs may take out lessons very profitable hereby, namely by the infermities of the body to be put in mind of the blemishes of the soule, and in the necessity and benefit of releeuing
4 the one, to labour also the releasing of the other. *And* seeing such care there was of purifiyng, that these virgins
1.Ioh.3.3. might please an earthly King, how ought we to purge our selues, that we may appeare before the Lord Iesu? surely he that hath this hope will purge him-selfe, and to whome the arme of the Lord shall reueale these things. As for the wicked it is not so with them: they make cleane the out side, to the further defyling of the inward man, and this is that for which this purification is iustly faulted, because it was to prouoke the lust of a Tyrant.

Obse.25. Out landish fashions vn lawfull. *And surely* if we consider the other manners of this purificacion which was to set out nature more gloriously to the bewitching of the eye by some painting or new-fangled attire. This also was most prophane and prepostrous. For if the exornation were by some strange and antique attire not agreeable to sobriety or the garish fashion of the country; this the Lord him-selfe condemes and doth threaten that he will visit such as are clothed with strange apparrell.

Obser.26. Painting of women vn lawfull. *If* it be by painting ỹ visage or such like hipocrisie; *this* surely, as it discouer notorious prides not to be contented with
1 what God hath giuen, but rather to find fault, yea to go a-
2 bout to correct the workemanship of God; *so* it beraies our folly ỹ hereby we reproch Nature, while we seeke to honor it

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it, and ſo diſſigure and alter our hue, *that* God when hee comes to iudgement ſhal not know his owne creature: *beſides* what a ſnare and *viſer* it is to intangle? what a bait to intrap, and cloak to hide this ſin: I would the ſhame therof did not proclaime in our eares. 3 Cyprian. 4

1 *Vſe.* Wel let vs Court, and Citty-dames learn here inſtruction, & let al take heed of the like hipocriſie, leaſt ſeeming to be ỳ which they are not; they proue only what they ſeeme, & ſo deceiuing others, at length deceiue themſelues. 2 Tim. 3.

Thus far of the counſell that theſe yongſters giue their Soueraigne: What? now hee is not aſhamed of ſuch councellors? No ſure he was al on fire with luſt, and therfore he cares not who powres in oyle thereto: and who fitter for ſuch an occaſion then young heads. Such *Rehoboams* are Princes to be ſedde by yong Counſellors, becauſe as they haue *leſſe knowledge*, and therefore may be ouer-reached of their Prince, ſo they haue leſſe courage, and ſo are fitter to be ouer-ruled by him, and which is the maine, *they* are leſſe ſetled in their affections, and therefore moſt likely to aduize rather for pleaſure then profit. *Obſ.* 27. Young heades fit to giue councell to tirants and godleſſe Princes.

Vſe 1. A notable leſſon *for Princes* that they follow not young heads, but rather *to diſtruſt* themſelues, whē ſuch ſtand before them; *procuring* ſuch as are graue & ſetled in their affections, as may croſſe thē in their luſts, rather then giue allowance therto. 1 2 3 2 3

But here you ſee like King, like Councellors, they no ſooner aduize, but he preſently aſſents to it, ſo ſaith the ſpirit. *This pleaſed the King and he did ſo*: It is a true prouerb: They muſt needes go that the diuell driues, here's more haſt then good ſpeed; no ſooner ſpoken but approued preſently, no ſooner approued, but preſently executed. *Obſ.* 28. Sin impatient of delay.

Behold *the impotencie and impatience of ſinne*, it admits no reaſoning to diſſwade the ſinne, it indures no delaies *leaſt* it ſhould happily bee fruſtrated, *ſo* cunning is Satan to follow them, *ſo* madde vppon vs is our corrupt nature. 1 2 3

Wherby

Sect. 1. 1 Sinne how to be preuented 2 2

1 *Vse.* whereby we may learne how to preuent sin, *if* temptation assault demur vpon it wisely, and so thou shalt happily confound the same: if it yet be importunate delay the execution by auoyding the opportunitie and occasions thereof, & so thou maist gratiously quench the rage of the same.

Sect. 2. The motions of Gods spirit how to be incertained. 1 2 3 4

And seeing the wicked are so forward to put euill motions in practise, Oh be thou as ready to entertaine the good motions of Gods blessed Spirit: *Esteeme* of them highly, and *imbrace* them readily, *practise* them cheerefully and *returne* the strength to the giuer: so shalt thou cherish the spirite of God, and by the meanes thereof attaine a perfection.

Obs. 25. The prophane guise of effeminate Princes. 2 3

Well thus you heare the King is pleased; And with what I pray you? Surely that, here's more fuell preparing for his lust, that hee may lengthen out his dayes in dalliance and wantonnesse. *The ordinary state of these* Persian *Monarches* rather to liue in a chamber making loue Ballads to their Minions, then to meete the enemie in the gate: *their* belly was their God, *and* their gluttony must needes haue vent, *their* eyes full of adultery and soule fraught with filthinesse, and therefore no marualle if the body must beare the burthen and serue as a weapon of all vnrighteousnesse.

A notable president for Christian Princes to possesse their vessels in holynesse and honour, not suffering the stranger to deuoure their strength, nor exposing their posteritie to cursing and dishonour, but to be carefull of chastitie in themselues. So to banish the occasions thereof from their Courts, as idlenesse, filthy dancing, vaine stage-plaies &c. And to see the Lawes seuerely executed against this sin, least the stranger indeed doe deuoure their strength; and as they tooke it of the hyre of an harlot, so they shall returne to the wages of an harlot.

But he that is filthie will be filthy still. The King is pleased, and he puts his desire in execution.

Now let vs further consider how God is pleased herein. What light bringes hee out of this darknesse? What waie makes he hereby for the deliuerance of his Church?

Verse. 5. *In the Citie of* Shushan *there was a certaine Iew whose*

name

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name was Mordecai *the sonne of* Shime. 1. *&c.*

In these few next verses the holy Ghost sets downe such meanes whereby *Hester* is aduanced to the Court, as shew their grounds and reference to others. And they are of two sorts.

The first is her preseruation and education, being for an orphane captiue, and so more extraordinarily plunged in affliction, and thereby more extraordinarily cast vpon the prouidence of God: who as he vsually worketh by meanes, so he prouides a kinsman to become his tutor and nourisher, and such a kinsman who as he was partaker with her in her humiliation should also be partaker with her of her aduancement.

This kinsman therefore is here described at large, by his *habitation* he dwelt in *Susan*; secondly by his Country he was a Iew. 3. by his name he is called *Mordicai*. 4. by his pedigree he was of the tribe of * *Beniamin* where also *his descent* is remembred; the sonne of *Iair*, the sonne of *Shimey* the sonne of *Kish* &c. *vers.* 5.

* Bitter contrition.

5. He is described vnto vs by his *outward condition*, namely that he was borne in the captiuity, which the holy Ghost necessarily implieth when speaking in the 5. verse. of his father *Kish*, *He it was* (saith the spirit), *which had bin carried away from Ierusalem with the captiuity that was caried away with* Teconiah *King of Iuda, whom* Nebuchadnezzar *King of Babel had caried away*. vers. 6. Wherepon it must needs follow that *Mordecai* was not caried away in the captiuity, but his father *Kish*. And so the worke of GOD herein appeeres more admirable, that one man borne in the captiuity should not onely be gardian to his cousin, left fatherlesse and comfortlesse, who in all likely-hood might need of such helpe himselfe, but that both these being in such a desperate condicion, should be so highly aduanced in the land of their captiuity.

Now that by this verse, *Kish* the father must be ment, and not *Mordecai* the sonne, I take it is more then probable.

1, Be-

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Obser.30. Mordecai was not caried away in the captiuity.

1. Becauſe men at this time vſually attained not to halfe thoſe yeares (for Iewiſh conceits paſſe them not) as of neceſſity *Mordecai* muſt now be of, if he were one that was caried away in the aforeſaid captiuity.

2. The text it ſelfe doth ſeeme to reſolue the matter where it makes this *Mordecai* couſin-german to *Heſter*, as being the daughter of *Abihail* who was *Mordecaies* Vnkle. Now among *i.* couſins as there is vſually much likeli-hood of years, ſo there could not here be ſuch difference as that *Mordecai* in any wiſe could be of that captiuity.

Wiſ.7.15.

3 And what need we ſerch the ſcripture vpon the authors of Iewiſh fables and vnneceſſary ſuppoſals; ſeeing granting that there might be diuers men of that ſame name, one ſucceeding another within generations, which is neither contrary to the chronology of the ſtory, nor the Anology of faith, both the ſcripture is iuſtified in it literall expoſition, which we are to cleaue vnto, when no falſe-hood or abſurdity followeth, and there-vpon all this controuerſie is happily ended?

Scripture not to be ſtrained.

So then we will take him for *Heſters* kinſ-man and indeed he performeth the part of a kinſ-man vnto her, as here in the verſe is deſcribed. *He nowriſhed* Heſter *who was the daughter of his vnkle*, and the holy Ghoſt giueth a fourefold reaſon of it, *One* from the *bond of affinity*, ſhe was his vnkles daughter, and therefore by the rule of nature he was tied to nowriſh her. Secondly from her miſerable condition, *ſhe had neither father nor mother*, and therefore, ſhe had need of ſuch of a gardian: and that we may ſee the prouidence of the Lord, in the tempering of his Childrens miſery, that there ſhalbe ſomewhat euen therein not onely to moue to compaſſion, but to giue hope of repentance, or elſe at leaſt to make miſery greeuious: behold *another reaſon* is added.

2 Namely the *maide was faire and beautifull to looke on*, and *thereupon followeth a fourth reaſon*: why hee
3 did nouriſh her, drawne from his owne conſcience and holy

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holy affection. Namely that *after the death of her father and mother he tooke her for his owne daughter*; that is he not only adopted her to be his Child, as by the rule of conſcience he was bound, but further alſo as his Child did moſt tenderly and fatherly traine her vp, as his loue did guide him and her condition did require, hauing alſo likely ſome portion from her friends, the rather to induce him thereto: and that may be a ſixt circumſtance in the deſcription of *Mordecai*. Namely from the vprightneſſe of his conſcience and conuerſation in loue: and this is the firſt meanes here ſet downe of *Hieſters* aduancement.

Obſer. 31. Gods Prouidence in planting his children fitly for his glory and their good.

Wherefore, that firſt this *Mordecai* was planted in *Suſhan*, not in any out or obſcure corner of the Kingdome, farre from notice and ſo from preferment, but hauing his abode in the Imperiall Cittie, whereas there wanted no meanes to corrupt, ſo their wanted not alſo meanes for imployment and aduancement, according to the fitneſſe, and forwardneſſe of men thereto; herein wee may behold, the admirable prouidence of GOD, not onely, in keeping this his ſeruant and his Nephew vndefiled in ſuch a ſinke of wickedneſſe, but hereby alſo making a neere cut by the aduancement of theſe, for the deliuerance of his Church.

Obſ. 32. The prouidence of God in planting of the Godly among the wicked.

And ſurely that *Mordecai* is reſident in *Suſis*; that *Suſis* hath a *Mordecai* to keepe out the wrath of GOD, and that *Mordecai* dwells in *Suſis* not ſubiect to Gods wrath, as being kept from partaking with them in their abominations, herein doth appeare two admirable acts of the diuine prouidence.

The one of his generall prouidence to the wicked, that when he will lengthen out temporall bleſſings vnto them, and beare with longer patience ſuch veſſells appointed to wrath, yet that they may ſee it is not for their ſakes, therefore hee plants among them ſome *Lot* or *Mordecaies*, either to bridle their ſinne by their example, that ſo they may be fit for longer proſperitie

1

2

3

and

and thereby flatters themselues in a vaine happinesse; or
4 els to pluck some out of the fire that they may avoide
the vengeance to come, that so the decree of GOD be-
ing furthered in adding to the Church, such as shalbe
5 saued, the poore Church growing more visible, might
haue some rest and shelter among the wicked, for the iust-
tyfiyng thereof euen in the sight of it enemies, when Christ
6 shall raigne euen in the midest of them. And the wicked
hereby being conuinced and so ripened to their destructi-
no, Gods Children may be also furthered and ripened to
7 their perfection: and so beeing fit for beauty and pro-
sperity they may enuy the same, not so much by their
owne care and industry, lest they should boast of them-
selues as by the admirable prouidence of GOD making
their enemies their puruayers, who though they heape
8 vp siluer as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay, yet
Iob. 26. 1 (. 17 they may prepare it and the wise shall put it on, and the
innocent shall diuide the siluer.

1 Where we may learne *as to* leaue it to Gods proui-
dence concerning our abiding, because we are in his hands
to dispose at his pleasure, and therefore neither to plot
2 for our planting in *Sushans*, nor to murmur at our *Lot* in
3 *Sodome*, so for the changing of our habitations, to rest
vpon the vnchangeablenesse of that prouidence, who if he
takes vs out of *Canaan* and plant vs in *Egipt*, where wee
would or should not be, yet it is the will of our glorious
Psa. 120. GOD and therefore must not be gain-said, and shall
serue in the end to our exceeding good: and there-
fore that this may turne indeede to our good, Let
vs take it a part of our humiliation that we dwell
Obs. 23. in *Mesech*, to be humbled for our sinne, and yet let vs
Why God remoues out of their Habitations. account it a part of Gods mercy towards vs, that we are
remooued from *Canaan* to *Egipt*: because *Egipt* shall
nourish vs, when *Canaan* cannot; and *Egipt* also shall
fare the better for vs, that we may be honoured, onely let
vs be carefull that we fare not the worse for it: Though
Israel play the harlot yet let not *Iudah* sinne: gleane we
the

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the good of Egipt, but pertake not with her in her euill: Lette vs labour if we can to make *Sodome* better, but at no hand lette *Sodome* make vs worse: Humble wee ỹ flesh by greeuing at *Sodome*, and prouoke we the flesh by crossing *Haman*, so the increase of their rage shal increase our faith; and their plots against vs, shall ripen their sinne, that is, their fall may be our raizing vp, and the place of sorrow may be the crowne of our glory. Thus did God prouide for *Mordecai* by planting him in *Susis*. 7 8 a Pet.

But was it possible that *Susis* did not corrupt *Mordecai*? Could *Ioseph* liue in *Egipt* and not sweare by the life of *Pharoh*? Did *Moses* leaue *Pharohs* Court because he would not inioy the pleasures of sinne for a season?

Behold here an act of Gods speciall prouidence. *Mordecai* shall bee in *Susis* and yet be vndefiled: Gods children shall dwell with the wicked and yet keepe their sincerity; Else how should they know that their sincerity is from him, that the beginning and continuance thereof is from his mercy; he that giues it without meanes can keep it contrary to meanes, and therefore neither the terrour, nor flattery, nor the example, nor fellowship of the *Sodomites* shall corrupt righteous *Lot*, because the Lord is the giuer & keeper of righteousnes: & where the Lord keeps, contrary meanes shall further: great cold without shall cause more heate within; and the greater wickednesse of others shall make vs both discerne and approue better the righteousnesse that is in vs: Yea wee shall hold it the faster by how much the more the wicked would plucke it from vs: as more fearing our selues and more earnestly craiuing the helpe of God. And so growing more resolute and constant in godlynesse, wee shall finde more comfort and benefit therein, not onely that our enemies heereby will bee wearied and so yeeld vp the bucklers, but our righteousnesse beeing iustified euen by our enemies, & they being hereby inwardly confounded as they are prepared to their vttersubuersion: so we shal gather the fruite of such *Trees* which they haue planted. *Obs.* 33. Gods children are kept pure and made better by their conuersation with the wicked. 3 4 5 6

And therefore howsoeuer wee should rather choose to

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Obser. 34. The godly best company and why? 2 Cor. 6.

conuerse with the godly, because *they* most please God, and best suit with our affections, they are trauelling our way, and so shall best further vs to happinesse, *they* onely are safe company, and who yeeld true comfort: Yet seeing we must go out of the world if we will not meddle with the wicked; and we are bound to make others better, without feare of making our selues worse: and God will try vs whether we do good of conscience or not: and

Obser. 35. Why we may conuerse with the wicked and how.

ỹ world must haue a stumbling-block euen by our liberty herein: therfore though we are not purposely to come into euil company, or principally to make choice of them, yet if

1. God do *call vs* we are not to refuse, because his commandement is our sufficient warrant; if God cast vs vpon them

2. we cannot choose; and then his prouidence is our protection. Nay if *they seeke vnto vs* in their extremity wee may

3. not deny them, for the hole haue no need of the Phisitian but the sicke. Nay we are to seek them out if they be gon

1. astray & so to ouercome them with our loue & industry.

2. So shall they return vnto vs, & not wee vnto them: Gods

3. power shal be seen in ỹ land of *Goshen, and* the righteousnes of his Saints shal haue a glorious trial, whē it is iustified & desired by ỹ enemies therof: thus was *Mordecai* safe in *Shusan*. But how comes it to passe ỹ he is planted in *Shusan*: the reason hereof the holy Ghost deliuers afterward: namely he was called to the Kings houshold, & made keeper of the Court gate (as chief porter & keeper of the Pallace) w pallace requiring his continual attendance, and the Court being vsually at *Shusan*; therfore he is said to be in the cittie of *Shusan*. And surely herein also the prouidence of the Almightie is no lesse wonderfull thus to prouide for his seruant, in the land of his Captiuitie, that he findes

Obser. 36. God giues his fauour in the eyes of the wicked.

such fauor with the Prince as to be admitted to his seruice, and that to a place of such trust & imployment, w may wel giue testimony of his loyalty and diligence, as also prepare a way to his further aduancement. Thus hath God giuen his children fauor in the greatest of their troubles, euen with those that are Gods speciall instruments for their greater affliction.

Thus

Thus was *Ioseph* gratious: Whereſoeuer hee came, his maiſter highly affects him wholy, hee was in his familie when he was in the priſon, he winnes the Iaylors fauor, when hee is out of priſon, *Pharoh* himſelfe ſets his heart vpon him, yea he found fauor in the ſight euen of all the Egiptians, who in likelyhood muſt needes enuy his greatneſſe and practiſe againſt him. But what ſhall we ſay? This is the *Lords doing* to turne the hearts of our enemies: *The power of godlineſſe* is ſuch, as ſometimes *to raiſh al*: and God wil haue both the wicked *left inexcuſable* hereby, and his the *better ſecured* by the ſame: as hauing a friend in the Court ſo gratious with the greateſt: who at the beſt are but ſeruants to further the cauſe of the Church. Geneſ. 39. Geneſ. 40. 41. 42. &c. 1 2 Verſ. 16. 17. 3 4

1 *Vſe.* And therefore though ſeruice of princes bee no inheritance, and their fauor (as themſelues) partiall and mutable: and ſo not ambitiouſly or corruptly to be bought or begd of vs, *yet* neither muſt we neglect to demerite the ſame by all lawfull obedience: *nor* if it be caſt vpon vs, proudly to reiect it, as being both a true note that wee preuaile with God worthily, if we be gratious in their eyes who are onely vnder him, and being a meanes alſo not ſo much to aduance our ſelues as that the Church of God may finde fauour hereby. This was the end why the LORD brought *Mordecai* to the Court, and ſo did *Mordecai* very gratiouſly anſwer this end. 2 3

Well thus wee haue heard of the place of his habitation. But may wee not know of what Country he was? Yea the holy Ghoſt tels vs he was a Iew by nation, a ſon of *Iacob*, and heire of the Couenant, who in the greateſt Apoſtacie of his bretheren remained faithfull with his GOD, and therefore in that greateſt miſery findes fauour with men. Behold how the Lord is no reſpecter of perſons, but in euery nation they that feare him ſhall be accepted of him, here's tribulation vpō the Iew in generall, becauſe they had forſakē their god, & yet *Mordecai* the Iew is exempted, becauſe he is faithfull with his God: *Obſ.* 37. God no accepter of perſons. Acts. 10. 35.

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yea here's *Mordecai* of the houſe of *Saul* ỳ rebellious and reprobate, and yet gratiouſly deliuered from the common corruption that ſo hee might bee gratious in the eyes of GOD. So iuſt is the Lord to recompence euery man according to his work, ſo little need hath hee of the ſinnes of men to aduance his glory, *ſo* wiſe is hee to diſtinguiſh the cauſe from the perſon, *ſo* abſolutely perfect to do all thinges by him and for him-ſelfe.

Vſe. Where we may learn as to be like vnto God in not reſpecting perſons, where there is equallitie in the cauſe; *ſo* we muſt take heed that with the Anabaptiſt wee abuſe not this liberty, as a cloake of diſobedience againſt ſuch perſons as the Lord hath aduanced, *neither* lette vs robbe Gods free election with the Papiſt, as if becauſe he is no reſpecter of perſons, therfore he chooſeth men for their foreſeen righteouſneſſe, neither let vs preiudice the ſincerity of our brethren, becauſe they want the outward complement to their perſons: but ſeeing the Lord regards not ỳ outſide, but indeed requireth the hart, & ſo principally accepts it, therfore let vs not content our ſelues with the out-ſide of the platter, but let vs labour to make al clean within: if we be aduanced let vs take heed of oppreſſion, for God will iudge the greateſt as wel as the leaſt, if we be oppreſſed let vs not diſpaire, for the cry of ỳ fatherleſſe is in the eares of the Lord, only let vs reſigne vp our ſelues wholy into the hands of ỳ gratious God who loued vs before wee were, for his own ſake & not for ours, & ſo let our loue be proportiõable, not for our ſakes, but for his glory, ỳ being purged daily of this droſſy corruption we may be fitted to ỳ glory immortal & vnſpeakable, ẅ ſhal inueſt our perſons according to that meaſure of grace which God hath filled them withal. *Mordecai* the Iew preferred in *Suſis*, is a Iew of the Tribe of *Beniamin*, of the poſteritie of *Saul*, reſerued among the Heathen, to praiſe the Lord, and deliuer his Church: Oh ỳ liberty of the *rich* mercies of God, how *faithfull* is he in his promiſes, how mighty to the preſeruation of his Church?

Math. 23.

Obſ. 38. The continuance of the Church and the condition.

Pſal. 80.

Who would haue lookt for good of *Sauls* poſteritie, ỳ was

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was forſaking of God, and had the Kingdome rent from him? Who would haue thought that there could haue bin a remnant in *Suſis*, to call vpon the name of God, and to be zealous for his glory? Wil God plãt a vine in *Canaan*, & remoue it into *Ægipt*? ſhal it be remoued out of *Ægipt* into the wildernes, & ſo into *Canaan* againe? ſhal it be remoued out of *Canaan* into *Babilon*, & from *Babelon* to *Suſis*? ſhal his Church bee toſſed and tumbled to all theſe places? ſhall all ſortes of nations giue harbour thereto? ſhall the Turke harbour it? yea Antichriſt himſelf ſhal not be able to roote it out: but euen there ſhalbe a Church, where ſatan hath his throne, and the diuell his Synagogue: Chriſt ſhall raigne in the mideſt of his enemies. Pſal. 80 Reuel. 2.

1. Behold here the condition of the Church in this miſerable world: It muſt be a Pilgrime vpon earth, ſcattered it ſhalbe ouer the face thereof that Gods power may be more magnified in the preſeruation thereof, and his worke the better accompliſhed both in, and by the ſame, while it being thus poſted, and toſſed to and fro, they rather looke and long for that Citty which is aboue; and by being thus changed, from veſſell to veſſell, it may both leaue ſauour of it good behind, it to the conuerſion and reuocation of others, & *may haue* it owne droſſe alſo purged out thereby to be prepared to her eternall reſt. *Reaſons.* *Obſ.* 39. Condition of the Church to be ſcattered vpon the face of the earth.

Uſe 1. By which we may learne to *diſcerne* the true Church of God, not by her ſitting as a Queene of the nations and flattering her ſelfe that ſhe ſhall not be changed, but by this we may diſcerne the true Church of God, namely that as ſhe muſt be toſſed and ſcattered ouer the face of the earth, ſo ſhe hath her loines guirt vp & her feet ready ſhod thereto: not ſetting vp her reſt becauſe it is good to be here, but wayting the Lords leiſure to call her forth where it pleaſe him. A notable warning to carnall Ghoſpellers that if they abuſe the Ghoſpel it ſhalbe taken away from them, the Temple of the Lord will be no bond, to hold him among them: *And withall* a moſt excellent comfort to the Children of God: that *Suſhan* ſhall receiue them, when *Iudah* caſts them out, and which may yet *make* Eſay 47. Ephe. 6. 2 Iere. 7. Ezech. 10. 11. 3 4

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for our greater comfort, this remouing of the Church, as it tends to the continuance therof in this life, so it also fitteth it to eternall rest in heauen. *And* therefore let vs not thinke it strange if we find not a biding Citty but are tossed vp and downe and scattred among the nations. It is the portion that our God hath allotted vs if we wilbe true members of his Church, and it is good for vs thus to be
Psal. 55. 15 changed, that we may feare and trust in God, who as by remouing our habitations he doth pluck vs out of those common desolations, which lie vpon places that despise his word: so in that he hath giuen vs the heathen for our inheritance and the vttermost bounds of the earth for our possession, hereby doth he also inuest vs with the possession of each Nation and the blessings thereof, which indeed properly do belong to vs: and all this that his Church may
Obs. 40. be continued on the face of the earth, yea may still preThe faithfulnesse of God in that the Church of God shall abide for euer. uaile and get ground in the world, till all her enemies be troad vnder her feet.

And is it possible that this poore afflicted Church should still hold out being so scattered and weakened? shall she continue for euer and shall no power preuaile against her?
1 Esay 9. shal there yet be a *remnant* and a *little seed*; shal there be a
Esay. 65. *truth*, and a *cluster* that hath a blessing in it: shall *Mordecai* and *Hester* both Jewes remaine to reuiue the Church
Rom. 11
1 of God, when God had seemed vtterly to haue forsaken his
2 people? yea surely the *Lord is faithfull*, and *in iudgement re-*
3 *membreth mercy*. *The* afflictions of the Church shalbe a
Exod. 1. meanes to increase the same. *Yea* the enemies of the
4 Church shal become seruants vnto it: *Her* weapons are
Psal. 72. 5 mighty to cast downe the strongest hold. *And her* sound-
2 Cor. 10. 4 ings are meanes to reuiue her againe. What should I
6 say? *Her* outward abasing, increaseth inward glory, & her
7 inward glory makes way to outward conquests. *She* must
8 be purged of her drosse, that she may be cloathed with perfit beauty: she must be blacke among men, that she may be faire in the eyes of her God, and so remaine more constant in his fauor and protection.

Vse. Which being so. 1. *as* therefore the bandyings of
1 the wicked are in vaine against Gods Church, *So* is our

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feare

feare is vaine that the Church may be destroied. *And* 2
therefore as the Church is continued, by being led aside 3
into the wilderness: so let vs now liue by faith in the discer- 4
ning of this Church. *Let vs* not forsake that fellowshippe, Hebr. 10.
which God wil not forsake, but let vs cleaue to ỳ Church
that shall abide for euer: old things are passed away, and
the shadowes are renewed, the vaile is pluckt off and the 5
hand writing of ordinances put out. *Oh let vs* not end in 6
the flesh that haue begunne in the spirit. *Let vs* hold the
profession of our hope without wauering, and continue to
the end, so is the crowne of righteousnesse laid vp for vs,
which the righteous Iudge shall giue at that day.

And that we may be the rather certaine hereof, behold
the Lord knoweth who are his, he calls them by their
names, yea their names are registred & finally recorded in
the word, that they may be the better perswaded that their
names are written in heauen: so saith the spirit. *Whose* *Obser.* 41.
name was Mordecai. See here the person whom God ap- Fit names to
points for the deliuerance of his Church; *Mordecai* is his be giuen to
name & bitternes is his portion: he is the son of contrition, our children.
ỳ must be son of consolation. *So* do the children of God an-
swere their names ỳ which they are they also make profes- 1
sion of. *So* doth God sanctifie his childrē to ỳ accomplish- 2
mēt of his worke: *So* are they fitted to giue him al ỳ glory. 3

Vse 1 Wherby wē may learne *As*; to giue fit names to our
children, to shew our hope of them, or to put thē in minde
of their natural condition, or of the means of God towards
them. *So* we are to acknowledge the loue of God vnto his 2
children that takes perticular notice of them in giuing and Sara, Sarah.
changing their names, ỳ they may be witnesses of his loue Abram,
towards them; *Yea* herein also may we obserue a special art Abraham,
of Gods prouidence in recording the names and generati- Iacob, Israel.
ons of such champions of his as haue stood out valiantly 3
for the cause of his church: & being his instruments for the
peace thereof: that so we may be the better conuin-
ced in the truth of their stories: and so our historicall faith
iustyfiyng the truth of the word may make way for
that iustifying faith in the Sonne of GOD, that so we

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Ioh. 3. haue in him euerlasting life. To this end it followeth.

This Mordecai *was the sonne of* Iair *the sonne of* Shemei *the sonne of* Kish *a man of Gemine.* In which words the holy Ghost sets downe the pedegree of *Mordecai* by the lineall descent from his auncestors.

Obse. 42. Genealogies how recorded in the word

And yet very briefely too, omitting many generations as the manner of the spirit is, the recording of some being sufficient to avouch the truth of the story, and among the rest mentioning especially such who might more set forth the truth of Gods promises to the faithful, and therby more settle faith for future occasions.

To this purpose is it that many others being omitted, there is speciall mention made here of the tribe of *Beniamin*, and of some such in speciall which may seeme to come out of the house and family of *Saul*. That so we might know how that this *Mordecai* was of the house of *Saul* and therein behold the great mercy of God, who though he reiected *Saul*, and in a manner rooted out his posterity, yet he shewed great mercy vnto the posterity of *Ionathan* not onely in preseruing the same in a lineall descent for the summe of fiue hundred yeares (if this *Mordecai* draw his petigree there, and surely it must be here or not from *Saul*) becausse his other children left no issue behind them, but in restoring also the same in some sort to the gouernment which *Saul* and his posterity was vtterly depriued of. A notable demonstration of the mercies of God that indeed they are aboue all his workes, he retaineth not his wrath for euer becausse mercy pleaseth him he will not punish the the children for the fathers transgression, but the righteous seede shall liue though the wicked stock be rooted vp, for shal not the Iudge of al the world do right? are not al soules his? hath not he a fatherly care ouer all? so that it is not he but their sins that make the difference of their conditions?

Obs. 43. Children shall not be punished for the fathers offence. 2. Sam. 9. 3.

1 2 *Vse.* 1. Surely if this lesson were througly learned, *how* would it humble the first borne, that they loose not their birth-right? *how* would it comfort the out-cast and despised that he may get the blessing? *how* is he taught hereby to

2 3

repaire

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repaire his fathers house, euen by declaring wisely the sins of his father: *how* may hee hope by this meanes to see light in darkenesse, and to turne the curse into a gratious blessing? *what* glory shall it be to him to borrow the *repaire of the breach* and the restorer of the paths to dwell in. Such was *Mordecai* of the family of wicked *Saul*; such was the sonne of God, many of whose auncestors in the flesh were wicked persons. *So* will not God be tied to nature in the bestowing of his blessings; and *so* wi l God make nature beholding to him in blessing beyond desert the fruit thereof. 4 5 Esay.58.

And surely where God bestowes blessings they come not alone: behold the same God that prouides out of the loynes of *Ionathan* those that shall build vp the old wast places, he also continewes the line of *Ionathan* euen for the space of fiue hundred yeares and very likely in the posterity of *Mordecai* hath not cut of the same, so requested *Ionathan* that mercy might not be cut of from his house for euer; *so* promised *Dauid*, and *so* the Lord makes it good; the seed of the righteous shall be mighty vpon the earth and the posterity of the Iust shall abide for euer, but for the seede of the wicked it shall be cut of and their generations shal be destroyd from the face of the earth: *which* as it stands with the righteousnesse of God that they which are heyres of the couenant should also be partakers of the blessing thereof: *so it* concernes his power to maintaine the righteous seede, which the world especially labours to roote out: yea his mercy is exalted in giuing his children herein a pledge of eternall happinesse; *and his Church* is by this meanes continued, and aduanced on the earth. 1.Sam.20.15. *Obs.* 44. God continueth and blesseth the posterity of the righteous. Pal.112. Isa.37.26.28 29. 1 2 3

Which *as it* containeth that Doctrine of diuels which forbiddeth marriage to the best sort of men, as if it made them bad and their posterity worse: *so* it also checketh the infidelity of such who esteeme the plentiful issue as a crosse vnto them if they be otherwise crossed and pinched in the world. *Neither* can they also here be excused, who hauing children do rather nourish corruption in them, that so they 4 1 2 3

may

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Math. 2. may depriue them of the blessing of the couenant, then by holy education fit them thereto: *surely* the Lord that therfore made one though he had aboundaunce of spirit because he sought a Godly seede, will vndoubtedly destroy the seed, that the stranger hath sownne and the bastard slips shall not take roote.

Pro 2.

Obs. 45. Posterity how to be continued.

Pro. 3. 15. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Wouldst thou therfore know how thy posterity may abide for euermore. *First* then *graft* thou in an holy stocke, and then drinke the waters of thine owne eisterne, *offer* vp the first borne to God and prune thy olive plants with holy discipline. Set not thy heart vpon them, neither dishonor the prouidence of thy God in a distrustful scraping for thē; *imploy them* in such callings as may humble the flesh, and season them with instruction to set them to grace, so shalt thou be a happy father of gratious children, and thou shalt not only to thy comfort see thy childrens children, but to thy greater comfort peace vpon Israel. Wel thus we haue heard of the habitation and country of *Mordecai*. Now lets a little further consider of his condition, it followeth.

Psa. 128.

Verse. 6. *Which had beene caried away from Ierusalem with the captiuity that was caried away with* Ieconiah *King of Iudah, whome* Nebuchadnezzar *King of Babel had carried away.*

Obser. 46. They let Gods Church to go into captiuity.

In which word being referd as we haue proued before to the faith of *Mordecai* the spirit of God sets downe the estate and condition of *Mordecai* by a consequent, namely that he was borne in the land of his countries captiuity. He was a captiue in a strange land, so were his fore-fathers in Egypt, and so are his posterity now slaues to all nations so are the children of God exercised with this affliction: *Ioseph* was sould for a bond-slaue & it is the lot of ỹ poore Christians vnder the Turke and such enemies of the Gospel to be sould & led captiues into a strange land. And that not without the especiall prouidence of God, *both* to put his children in minde of their naturall condition that they are no better then the slaues of Satan, *and* also punish them iustly for their fornications with other nations, by giuing them vp as a prey vnto them, and yet euen to their especial good

Eccle. 38.

and

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and his great glory.

Who while they are in Babilon remember Sion, and thereby not onely *apprehend* the true cause of their affliction namely the contempt of Sion, and the comforts thereof, *but* remembring Sion they also reuiue such comforts as before they had stored vp, thereby to maintain in them the true life of grace: *and* so often remembering Sion, and meditating thereon as thereby they witnesse their harty longing after the same, so hereby they fit themselues to the restoring of Ierusalem. *To this* end is it that while they are in captiuity they hartily labour the conuersion of others, that so they may offer vp the riches of the gentiles vnto God and so the prouidence of God is magnified ouer them, not only in humbling the flesh in the land of their captiuity their soule refuseth comfort, but further also in quickning the life of grace their vowes are renewed, and heauen suffers violence, whereby preuayling with God, they do also preuaile with men, and so find such fauour in the sight of the heathen that once by them they are sent forth to Sion againe.

Psal. 137.
3
4
5
6
7
8
Exod 54
Ezra. 45.
Eche. 45.
Obs. 47.
Church how prepared to Captiuity,

Vse. This captiuity being a iudgment with may befall the Church of God, *as this* condemneth the vaine presumption of those that dreame of a locall perpetuity and visibility of the Church of God: *so* it also chalendgeth their extreame folly that prepare the Church of God to so heauy a iudgement, *either* by bringing the Church in bondage at home, while they captiuate the liberty thereof to the lusts of men; *or* by impudent communicating the wickednesse abroad they do thereby choose the threshing floore, where the Church must be purged. Surely as God is righteous in his iudgements so is he mercifull, and therefore we shall *beare* the rod before we feele it, yea one correction of the almighty shal *foretel* another, that so we may see the plague and hide our selues, and happily auoyd the vengeance to come, who so is wise let him vnderstand these things and to whom the arme of the Lord hath reuealed them.

1
2
3

Well the Church of GOD is in Captiuity, and is it not

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Iere. 39. Iere. 51 2 Reg. 25 2 Chro. 36. &c.

not to some purpose that the holy Ghost makes such particular and often mention of it?

1 Yea surely. As the Lord is knowne by executing of Iudgements, 2. So would he haue vs meditate and contemplate the same, that so we may be confirmed more and more in knowledge. 3. And surely as they are some of those workes of God which are worthier our consideration. 4. So do they keepe vs from *security* in sinne and *presumption* of Gods mercies. *They* confound Atheists and scorners of religion. They keepe vs in obedience and increase our faith.

Obs. 48. Gods Iudgements are to be recorded & meditated. Psa 16. Psal. 111

Vse 1. And therefore *seeing* the Lord doth daily bring his iudgements to light, let them not passe aboue our sight as if they concerned vs not. *Let* vs not esteeme them as the ordinary effects of nature, and therefore haue no reference at all to sinne. *Let* vs not suppresse them in policy or *deprave* them by malice. *Let* vs not in pride diminish them, or in security forget them: But in the feare of God take we speciall notice of them, as the admirable workes of God, though nature be vsed in them: *As* seasonable messengers of Gods will, and therefore to be hearkened to; as liuely glasses to see our faces in, and therefore not to forget our iniquities that are censured thereby: and *as* profitable furnaces to purge out our drosse, and take away our sinne, and therefore we should the rather be amended by them: *Surely* if they do not amend vs they will be witnesses against vs and draughts of that cuppe of wrath which the wicked shalbe drunken withall in hell.

Psal. 10. 4. 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Profits of Gods iudgements. Esay 1. 9

Obs. 49. God often changeth and confoundeth the outward prosperity and visibility of his Church. Psa 23. 2

But is the glory of the earth gone into captiuity? is *Ierusalem* the citty of the great God, and place of his delight where he promised to dwell for euer, and so made fast the barres of her gates, is she led captiue into a strange land? Doth she dwel among the heathen? and there is none to comfort her? are her aduersaries chiefe? & do her enemies prosper? while she was faithful when God troad vpon the neckes of her enemies and turned Kings in chaines and Nobles in fetters of yron? Oh what a change is here of this glorious

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glorious Cittie? hath the Lord forgotten to be mindeful? or can his will be resisted? Surely, as these outward things fall alike vnto all, and no man knoweth Gods loue or hatred by them; so the outward changes of earthlie things do iustifie the vnchangeablenesse and constancy of GOD. *Not* onely in that he deales indifferently to euery soule that sinneth, vnto the Iew first, and then to the Grecian, *but further also* by the changing of the outward state in this life, he make way for the accomplishment of his vnchangeable and eternall decree concerning the saluation of his Church, to which by these outward changes, she is graciously prepared. Eccles. 9 1 2 3 Rom. 1. 4

Vse 1. Which as it makes the way to the accomplishment of his owne, so it iustifieth also the truth of his promises, which being conditionall in regard of temporall blessings, namely so long as they shalbe fit for vs, and wee can make right vse of them: when we faile in those conditions, these promises are yet so expired, that the right of them are remayning; we are onely so farre depriued of the effect, as that being humble therein and so renued by repentance, wee not only recouer our possession in these things, but are also further fitted to the enioying of the substance whereof these are but very shadowes.

And therefore as it stands with the constancy and couenant of God, that the Church may be thus obscured, and to the outward view extinguished, so doth it make also for the exceeding *good of the Church of God* and *condemnation of the world.*

Obser. 50. Changes of the Church tend to exceeding good thereof.

Concerning the Church it tends to the good thereof many waies.

1. That it may discerne it selfe to be the true Church of God, in that it liues and inwardly prospers, yea intierely preuailes, though the branches and leaues seeme dead and withred.

2 The Church hereby is exceedingly humbled in regard of the abuse of her former liberty, and so is fitted greeuously to repentance.

3 She

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3 She is also stripped of carnall confidence, by occasion whereof she fell to such abuse and so is prouoked to settle wholy on God.

4 She hath now more comfortable experience of the power of God and Godlinesse, who as he now shewes himselfe more inwardly gratious, so doth he iustifie the soundnesse and integrity of his Church.

1 Ioh. 2.

5 She hath now more leisure to gather inward strength as being happily eased of outward prosperity, a very maine let and weakning thereof.

6 It hath by this meanes experience of her friends, and so is drawne thinner and nerre to God. And lastly she is by this meanes deliuered from greater desolations which in the Land of her prosperity might haue happened vnto her: as for the world it receiues his condemnation hereby many waies. 1. It is offended at this blackenesse of the Church and the crosse of Christ is a stumbling blocke thereto. 2. Affliction is hereby added to affliction, and now they crie *downe with it downe to the ground*, *Haman* is not content that the Church is in bondage, but he will lay a plot to roote it out quite. 3. Hereupon growes security and ripenes in sinne and so when the harueſt is ripe the sickle shalbe put in. *Ioel.* 3. 13. Thus doth God dispose of these great alterations of his Church. Thus make they for his glory the benefit of the Church of God and the confusion of the world.

Ioh. 7. 48. 1 Cor. 1. 23 *Obser.* 51. The world confounded by the changes of the Church. Psal. 137. *Hest.* 3

And therefore seeing the Church of God may sometimes be thus base and contemptable in the eye of the world. 1. *Boast* we not vpon such preuiledges as are of the world. 2. *Neither* content we our selues with such whose glory shalbe our shame. 3. *But adorne* we the hidden man in the heart which shalbe glorious for euer. 4. *Reuerence* we the power of God who is able to ouerthrow the glory of the world: 5. *And feare* we his iustice if we be found in the like sins. 6. *But magnifie* we his prouidence, ẏ is able thus to bring light out of his darkenes. 7. *and beleeue* we constantly the perpetuity of the Chruch which is meruailously preserued

Vse of the afflictions of the Church. Iere. 7 Osse. 5 Amos 5.

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ſerued in her greateſt decaies. Well thus we haue heard of the captiuity of the Church. But who are they that beare the brunt of this heauy affliction?

Surely *Ieconiah* the King his Princes and Nobles, the mightieſt are moſt humbled & the ritcheſt are moſt aimed at. So are great ones ſure to drinke deepe of the generall ſcourge, when happily the poore of the land are eaſed therby: a matter moſt agreable to the iuſtice of God. 1. Becauſe great ones haue a conceipt, that they are out of gunſhot, who dare touch them? who can pluck them downe? come famine and ſuch like iudgements, they will haue a preuiledge, and therefore the Lord to confound their confidence he hath a rod of his indignation euen to breake the greateſt in peeces. *Obſ.* 52. Great ones drinke deepe of the cup of vengeance. Eccle. 9. 6 Iere. 39 Eſay. 23.

2 Theſe greater perſons are the ring-leaders in ſinne, and therefore there is a time when they ſhalbe met withall.

3 They are the rod to ſcourge and afflict their people and therefore it is iuſt with God to heare the cry of the poore and to aueng them of their oppreſſors by giuing them eaſe when their oppreſſors ſhalbe recompenced. Exod. 22 2 Theſſ. 1. 7

4 The pride and couetouſneſſe of the conqueror aymeth at the greateſt, theſe ſhalbe ſure to the ſpoile, howſoeuer others ſcape; a notable leſſon both for great ones and inferiors.

1. As to humble the great ones in the ſence of their greatneſſe, becauſe they cannot out-ſtand the wrath of God.

2. So to aduiſe them alſo to be carefull of their waies, not ſparing great offences, nor preſuming of their owne greatneſſe, leſt the ſmart of their ſinne light moſt heauily vpon themſelues.

3. Secondly the ſubiect is here inſtructed as not to dreame of impunity ſeeing the greateſt ſhall ſmart for it, and therfore to beare the yoake with patience, ſeeing there will be an end. 4. So to mourne when Princes do eate in the morning, and ſtretche themſelues vpon Iuory beds, not regarding the afflictions of *Ioſeph* becauſe this is a certaine note of ſome iudgement inſuing. Amos. 6. 5

5. And

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5 And yet herein also to comfort themselues; that God will set a marke on those that mourne for the present euills; they shalbe deliuered from the common calamity.

But who is the rod that the Lord appoints to this great execution: the holy Ghost addeth.

Whom Nebuchadnezar *King of* Babel *had caried away.*

Obser. 53. God vseth great and mighty enemies for the chastizing of his Church. Esay 8.10.

Behold the rod with God vseth for the chastisement of his Children: euen a most proud, mighty and malitious enemy, whose eyes shall not spare them, nay who shall hope vtterly to roote them out. And yet the Lord most *righteous* and *mercifull* herein. 1. Abac. 12.

The righteousnes of the Lord appeares in these circumstances.

Sect. 1. This standeth with his iustice. Ezech. 29. 1 Reg. 22. Hest. 5.

1 Because it is in his choice to vse what rod he will and the rod he vseth is sanctified thereto. Esay 15.

2 The wickeds teeth are an edge til they be on this worke, it is the office they desire, this count they their greatest of happinesse, all their honour is nothing, because *Mordecai* wil not bow vnto them, and therefore to choose they will haue a fling at *Mordecai*. 3. And is not the Lord righteous herein, so to giue them their desire that while they spurne at a stone it breakes them in peeces? Zach. 12.

Exo. 23 Iere. 2.34

4 The Godlie themselues makes choice of this rod: they will *commit abhomination* and al filthinesse with them, and *in their extremity they will seeke* for helpe of them. 5. And is not the Lord righteous to giue his children their desire herein, that being thoroughly secured hereby they might answere Gods desire in their vnfained repentance? 1. And doth not this magnifie exceedingly the *mercies* of God, *to prouide* such a furnace as shall not dally with them but purge them thoroughly. 2. That so being chastized soundly in the world they may not be condemned in the life to come.

Sect. 2. It stands also with Gods mercy. 1 Cor. 11.32

Vse 1. Surely as here we may behold the estate of the Church, that she must looke for great and sharpe afflictions: So we may also take notice of the power of sinne in arming our owne flesh thus cruelly against vs;

2

And

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And seeing al curses frō *Adam* are turned into blessings by Christ, therfore lette vs learn to make our flesh our friend, 1. *not by* soothing in sinne, *nor pertaking* there-with: *but by* sound reproofe and wise preseruing our selues from the contagion thereof: Labour wee to subdue the flesh to God, and then it shall bee seruiceable vnto vs. And in all thinges labour wee to approue our selues vnto God; so shall he make our enemies at peace with vs. And seeing our greatest enemies are they of our owne flesh; rest wee not in man, nor in the sonnes of men, put wee no confidence in a Councellor, no not in the wife that lies in our bosome; but count wee al as dung in regard of the peace of a good conscience, so shal we hereby either make our enemies our friendes, or at least we shal bridle & sanctifie to our good, their rage against vs.

3 *Sect.* 3. Flesh how to be made our friend. 1 2 3 4 Verse, 16. 17. 4 Math. 10. Mich. 7.

Well thus wee see the *Church* of God is carryed away captiue: But was this the first draught of this cup of affliction? Surely no: We shall find that this people of the *Iewes*, besides many fore-running Iudgements of the *famine, pestilence, ciuill warres, forreyne inuasions*, and the like, had *three great draughts* before euen of this *cuppe of captiuitie*, and after this dranke the dregges of this cuppe. The first draught did the *Kingdome of Israel* drinke: *One by* Tiglath *Pileser* the King of *Assur*, who carried away diuers of their Tribes into bondage, and the *latter* by *Shalmaneser King of* Ashur, who carried away the whole residue of the ten Tribes into perpetuall captiuitie: *the other three* draughts the *Kingdome of Iudah* dranke *at* in *Manasseh* his time, who was carried away captiue into *Babilon*, and vpon his time repentance restored againe. *The second draught* was in the time of *Iehoiakim King of Iuda*, who hauing rebelled against *Nabuchad-nezzar king of Babell* after that he had serued him three yeares; therefore the *King of Babel* hauing first sent his Captaines to spoyle and waste the Country round about, to the very walles of the Citty, at length in the raigne of *Iehoiachim the sonne of* Iehoiachim the former, begirts the Citty and

Obs. 54. God chastiseth his children often with the same rod. 2. King. 15. 19. 2 King. 17. 9. 10. 2 Chro. 33. 11. 2 Reg. 24. 10.

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and ſtrangely beſeegeth it, The extremitie whereof, the King and his Princes beeing not willing to indure it, by the perſwaſion of the Prophet *Ieremy*, yeeld them-ſelues to the conquerors pleaſure, and ſo for this time though they ſaued the Citty from deſolation, yet both the ſpoile thereof was aboundantly carryed away; and togither with the King, his Princes, and Miniſters of ſtate, and meanes of defence, at leaſt *ſeauentéene thouſand* are at this time carryed into *Babilon*: and this is the captiuitie mentioned in this booke of *Heſter*, the ſame which is here *Iechoniah* being no other then *Iehoiachim*, as appeareth by ỹ euidence of the word, and circumſtances of the hiſtory: It being no vnuſuall thing with the holy Ghoſt *to call one perſon by diuers names.*

Wiſ. 14. 15.

1 Chro. 3. 16. Ierem. 22. 24.

After this captiuity in the raigne of *Iehoiachim*, followed the *laſt and moſt extréme* draught of this cuppe, ſome *eleuen yeares after*, when *Zedekiah* raigned as Viceroy vnder *Nebuchad-nezzar*, who becauſe he rebelled againſt his Lord: therfore came *Nabuchad-nezzar* ỹ ſecond time and beſeeged the Cittie, and the inhabitants ſtanding vppon their defence, he after ſome two yeares ſiege took it, and not onely expoſed it to the ſpoyle of his Army but after defaced and conſumed it by fire. The glorious Temple & ſtately Pallaces, the ſumptuous building and proud walls, all were deſolate, broken downe, and ruinated: And not onely ſo, but euen all the glory and multitude of the people were carryed at ſeuerall times into *Babilon*, ſaue only ſome poore that were left to Till the Land.

2 Chro. 36. Ierem. 39. 2 Reg. 25. 11.

Thus did this people drinke of this cuppe of captiuitie, and yet (as you haue heard) *in meaſure, in the branches therof*; not all at once, leaſt they ſhould be drunke thereby, and ſo returning to their vomit, make no right vſe thereof but by degrees, now a little, then ſom-ewhat more, the rod being a teacher, euen while it lay vpon them, and therein teaching vs the ſinguler wiſdome and mercy of our God in the chaſtiſing of his children: he comes not vpon them ſodainly

Eſay. 17. *Obſ.* 55. God chaſtiſeth his children in meaſure and by degrees.

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sodainly, neither *sweepes* he them away *at once* : but as he giues them *warning* of the rod ; that so they may be prepared for it, so he *orders his iudgements* that they may best preuaile. And therefore first he shootes forth his more gentle and scattering arrowes of the *famine* and *pestilence* : which though they hit some, yet they flye ouer the heades of many, that by these, being warned they might be brought to repentance, when these milder corrections will not serue, then hee smites them yet *seauen times more* : here come in *ciuill dissentions* and *forreyne* Leuit. 1
Inuasions, to humble & abait the pride of the great ones; and if as yet they will not returne vnto him, then behold Amos.
hee will smite them seauen times more : The *cuppe of Captiuitie* shall be ministred vnto them : yet shall they drinke thereof at times, in measure, and by degrees : So doth the Lord in iustice remember mercy, so doth hee *measure* out his iudgements, both that wee may beare them, and that by them we might be brought to repentance : As for the wicked, the Lord deales not so with them. *Affliction shall not rise the second time*, with one 1 Nehemi.
stroke will he make an end of them : *roote and branches*, *head and taile*, will he cut off at one blow. Genes. 19.

Vse. Which prouidence of God is manifested most infallibly in the vsuall of his chastisements vpon his Church, as it namely confounds the insolency of the wicked, 1
who thinke to make an end, when God doth begin ; so it 2
is also a gratious checke to the preiudice and impatience of Gods children, who notwithstanding this apparant difference that God makes betweene them and the wicked in the seuerall chastisements which he laies vpon them : for many times in y^r folly doe they both censure God as their Iob.
enemie, and themselues to be dealt withall not as friends Lament. 2.
but enemies.

And solely affliction giueth vnderstanding, and the 3
Lord of it selfe ainseth hereat in his ordering of his chastisements. Therefore let the man of God feare the rodde, and who hath appointed it. Let vs take no-

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tice hereby that God appointeth them, in that they are ſo wiſely and mercifully ordered: and ſo let vs patiently vndergoe this burthen and be comforted therein, that wee are vnder the hands of a father who knoweth whereof we are made, and therefore will lay no more vpon vs then
4 we ſhall be able to indure: *And ſeeing* the Lord hereby
Amos. 2. 13. intends our repentance, that if we will eaſe him of our ſinnes, he will eaſe vs of his rods: Let vs here wiſely take notice of the cauſe of the continuance of his iudgements, namely impenitencie and increaſe of ſinne. *And lette* this be our marke, to *looke for ſeauen times more* if we do yet multiplie our ſinnes againſt the Lord of glory. And therefore let vs meet the Lord by repentance that he may ſtay the hand of his iuſtice. *Let al* States be humbled, becauſe
Ierem 12. Amos. 3. ỹ Lyon hath roared. And ſeeing the hand of the Lord is ſtretched out ſtil let vs not liue by examples, & build our happines vpon ỹ broken reeds of *Egipt*: *Let vs* not run to *Aſſur*, & truſt in vain helps: but *let vs* turn to ỹ Lord, for he hath wounded and he wil heale vs, he wil render vs the loſſe that the peſtilence and inundations, the intollerable froſts, and fearefull earth-quakes (our cruell oppreſſors at Home, and treacherous friendes abroad) haue made: he wil yet dwell among vs for his name ſake, and reſtore beauty for aſhes, yea we ſhall for euer liue in his ſight. Thus haue we now the condition of *Mordecai*, he is in the ſtate of bondage and ſlauery to ỹ wicked: How doth he now behaue him-ſelfe in this condition? Doth he yeeld to neceſſitie, and imbrace the preſent world? Doth he renounce his God and the care of his country, to eat of ſuch things as pleaſe the wicked? No you haue heard before that he liued vnrebukeably: but what inſtance haue we to giue euidence thereof: *It followeth therefore:*

Verſe, 7. *He nouriſhed* Hadaſſah *that is* Heſter, *his vncles daughter*: What reaſon had he to mooue him thereto? Here is, firſt the bond of nature: *She was his vncles daughter*, Secondly, *Here is the bond of neceſſitie, for ſhe had neither father nor mother.* Thirdly, here's *a priuiledge of nature.* *And the*

Maide

Maid was faire and beautifull to looke on, the rather to allure and perſwade him thereto. Fourthly, here *is the bond of conſcience*, likely it is ſhe was committed vnto him after her fathers and mothers deceaſe, and therefore it is ſaid.

And after the death of her father and mother, Mordecai *tooke her for his owne daughter.*

Firſt he not only tooke vpon him her education and maintenance, but adopted her alſo as his owne daughter; and ſo to conferre vppon her the priuiledges of a Child.

VVherein firſt we may behold the great mercie of God vnto his children, that in their greateſt afflictions, they ſhall be prouided for: *Mordecai* ſhall be able to nouriſh *Heſter*, and *Heſter* ſhall haue her Vncle *Mordecai* not only to preſerue her from the extremitie of miſery (which Orphanes are ſubiect to) but to traine vp this tender *Maiden* in the feare of God; and to defend her chaſtitie frō the rage of luſt.

Two notable priuiledges of Gods children vnder the croſſe, that either they ſhall be able to ſuccor others, or they ſhall find reliefe with the ſafety of their credit, and peace of conſcience.

And ſurely that Gods children in their troubles, as they are able, ſo they ſhould comfort others, this ſerues to the magnifying of GODS power, and faithfulneſſe towards them; and alſo to the great tryall of their moſt holy faith. *Obſer. 56.* Gods children are to comfort & releeue each other in their troubles.

The power of God is ſeene herein, that the wicked are brideled, who (out of queſtion) would not haue the righteous liue by them, vnleſſe they will hang vppon them, if they might haue their wills, they would keepe them bare ynough from doing good to others; and ſo the children of God are planted in the midſt of their enemies, and herein alſo doth appeare the great faithfulnes of our god, who inables his children to lend where they ſhould borrow, and by this to be aſſured of a good ſucceſſe in al occaſions

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casions, seeing in ỹ land of their captiuity they can minister to others and is not our faith very gratiously tried herein, when hauing our liues continually in our hands, and therfore no certainty of what we haue; yet depẽding on Gods prouidence, we do comfort others, that had more need of comfort and remedy our selues. Would not some carnall
1 wise virgins haue here replyed; *wee* haue little ynough
2 for our selues, we cannot spare it least wee want in the time of need; *we* must keepe somwhat to appease our task-
3 maisters, *somewhat* to buy our liberty, *we* shall be thought to be rich if we be harbourers of others, and so shall bee
4 markes to the mallice of the spoylers: *We* shal hereby dis-
5 couer our selues to be patrones of such out-casts, as being enuied where they deserue to be pitied, may breed no good blood for our quiet setling: Thus would blind rea-
1 son haue schooled a carnal man, but the man of God hath another rule, hee sees his life is in his hands, and therefore he will do good while hee may, he knowes now there is more need, and therfore he wil cast his bread vpon ỹ wa-
3 ters: *and* where shal he haue such comfort & portion in wel-
4 doing, as in releeuing the houshold of faith, he sees his
Moyses. brethren like to go to the wal, and therfore hee wil rescue
1 Exod. him though it cost him the setting on: *he knowes* ỹ to feare
5 well doing in regard of the wicked, is to giue strength to the wicked, and so depriue himselfe of the oportunity of doing good. *He beleeues* ỹ God wil then come to deliuer
6 when he casteth vp a *Moses* to take the cause in his hands;
7 *he sees* it will daunt the enemie when Gods children make much one of another and hold together; and therefore hee becomes a meanes to strengthen the weakest and vnite them in families, and so bind them in holy leagues and as-
8 sentations togither: *he feares* no euill tidings, no not the
Psal. 112. spoile of his estate, because his heart is stablished and be-
6 leeues in God, and hee distributes thereof to the poore, *wherby he* wins the hearts of the enemie, yea hee will not feare vntil he see his desire vpon his enemies. And why? the Lord is his sheepheard, and he liues by faith in the son

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of God, and though he passe through fire and water, yet the Lord shall bring him into a wealthier place. This is ỹ merciful man that sowes in teares: the Lord wil recompence him aboundantly; he shal reap in ioy: so was *Mordecai*, and so hee did finde. 1. *Vse. A notable president* of true bounty, and therein also a liuely marke of the true child of God. *And therefore* lette not inabilitie hinder vs from comforting others, least the widdowes *mite* be a witnesse against vs: *Let not pollicie* discourage vs from releeuing the Saints of God, least while we please men wee make God our enemie: *Let vs* not feare want when God is the borrower; *let vs* not doubt of requital, where his children are ingaged: *let vs* not be newters in such cases, where not to be with, is against God; *but let* vs maintaine Gods side that he may maintaine vs. *Obediah* wil nourish the Prophets of God, though *Iezabel* intend the contrary, and *Ionathan* will succor *Dauid*, though his father seeke his life: and did they want their reward? *Mordecai* nourisheth *Hester*, who happily for her sake beeing beutyful might haue indangered his estate. Oh let vs not consult with flesh where God cõmandeth! *But how* I pray you is *Hester* nourished? What doth she pay for hir outward maintenance? Is her conscience set to sale for ỹ belly? Is her beauty made the broker to maintaine this miserable life? Doth she offer the sin of her soule, for the fruit of her body? Surely no; vpõ these tearmes she might haue found fauour in the eies of a *Persian*, & such mercies of the wicked had bin extreme cruelties. Behold here then the true bounty of Gods children; their table is no snare, their riches are no bait to corrupt ỹ souls of men: *they* intend not to make *Dauid* their slaue, by their kind intertainment, *they* giue him not *Michel* to bereaue him of his life: *They* blind not the eyes of the wise by their bosome liberality, *nor* hunt after the pretious life of men, with their sacrifices and peace offerings: they kill not when they kisse; but giue that it may bee giuen: *their* principall marke is to winne the soule: *So* did our Sauiour turne water into

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Vers, 12, 10.
Ver, 23.
Pla, 69. 22
Obs. 57. The bounty of Gods children is no Snare, but especially labours the good of the soule.
Deut, 16. Vers, 7.
Ioh. 2.

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wine, that nature might bee turned to grace: ſo did he giue a great draught of fiſh to make fiſhers of men. So doth GOD beſtow theſe outward bleſſings, that beleeuing in him, we may ſee greater things thē theſe.

And ſo are his children like their heauenly Father, ſo they do find their bread after many daies againe, when it is thus diſtributed in conſcience and wiſdome.

Vſe 1. *A notable* rule for true liberality: *that* the ſtreame thereof turne good to the ſoule. *Not* that we ſhould be exempted hereby from doing good to the
2 wicked, vpon pretence to harden them in their ſinne. *Nei-*
3. *ther* that we ſhould content our ſelues with that liueleſſe bounty of many who will ſeeme to comfort the ſoule with a little lip-labour (*God helpe* &c.) *neither* yet to neg-
4 lect our ordinary callings in an honeſt care of this life, as if all were loſt labour which is not immediately imploied vpon the ſoule: *But ſo* to ſupply the bodie as that it may
5 ſerue the ſoule: *So* to ſeeke the Kingdome of Heauen, as
6 not to neglect the care of our families: *So to* ſhew our
7 true loue to the ſoule by relecuing the body for it ſake:
8 *And ſo* to humble the ſinne as that we haue compaſſion
9 in the perſon: *Making* difference therein where wee
10 ſee likely-hood of moſt inward good: *And* ſhortning our bounty where it may be an occaſion to the fleſh. Thus he that ſcattereth ſhall haue plenty. So did *Mordecai* diſtribute, and ſo the Lord gaue a bleſſing.

And was it not a wonderfull bleſſing of GOD, that a beautifull Maiden, left fatherleſſe and motherleſſe, ſhould meete with ſuch a gardian: who did not ſet
Obſ. 58. her beauty to ſale, and her conſcience on the racke? how
God prouides for his children in trouble with the ſafety of a good conſcience. many deſtreſſed ſoules are there, that in the land of their captiuity, thinke it an high bleſſing if the ſhip-wrack of their conſcience may procure their quiet and the proſtituting of their beauty may winne them fauour.

Behold here then an excellent priuiledge of Gods children in their extremities, that they ſhall finde releiſe with

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with the ſafety of a good conſcience : not one haire of their head, much leſſe the peace of the minde ſhall miſcary : thereby : and why ? *are they* not the beloued of God and in their chaſtizements moſt beloued? and how ſhall this loue appeare if they bee not kept fit for it ? *hath* not 1
God promiſed that all ſhall turne to their good , and ſhall then their afflictions be meanes of their chiefeſt hurt? *Haue not* the Saints of God come out purer from this furnace? *can the outward* reliefe be a bleſſing without the feaſt of a good conſcience? *nay doth* not the inward peace giue true contentment in affliction ; and ſo keepes vs from reaching out our hand to wickedneſſe, for the 2
eaſing of our burthen? Would the Godly deſire to liue in 3
affliction were it not that they might increaſe in grace, 4
and be more fitted to Heauen? and will not the Lord ful- 5
fill the chiefe deſires of them that feare him? 6

If they be not hereby drawn neerer to God & made more conformable to him.

Are we not by theſe troubles ſummoned to our end and 7
ſhall we now remoue the care of that which may make vs 8
giue vp our account with ioy?

And what I pray you is it that holdes vp in troubles? 9
doth man liue by bread onely? ſurely no, it is the ſpirit of a man that beareth his infirmity, but a wounded ſpirit who can endure?

Vſe A notable condition of the height of worldly wiſdome, whoſe maine plea is this , that *they muſt liue*, and therefore when troubles comes, which ſummons them to die, yet they muſt do as the world doth , that is, that they may liue longer in miſery, they will (what lies in them) renounce the meanes of liuing for euer in true happineſſe: *As if* there were a neceſſity laid vpon them to make 1
ſhip-wrack of a good conſcience, that they may eſcape death when there is no other likeli-hood but death knockes now at their dores : *Or if* there were hope of lon- 2
ger life, yet the keeping of a ſound heart would not be life to the bones, and ſo enable them the better to beare their infirmity : *Where* is thoſe mens faith that pleade one- 3
ly with *Eſau* for the pottadge that they may not die

for

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for hunger, and know not that God can giue them the
4 blessing whereby they may haue wisdome and ritches.
What madnesse is there to runne deeper on the score
5 when we are called to paiment? *What folly* to distrust God
6 then when we are most cast vpon him? *What wisdome* to
7 forsake God, when the world forsakes vs, what hope of
comfort in the world when we make it thus our enemie?

Vse Well, who so is wise let him vnderstand these
1 things, and to whom the arme of the Lord hath reuealed
2 them: *Let him learne* to liue by faith, that so sinne do
not deceiue him. *Let him* wisely consider the inualuable
3 price of his soule, and then bethinke that he sell it not for
that which could not buy it: *Let* him know he shall least
enioy that which he buies at so deare a rate: and for the af-
4 ter receiuing (I tremble to speake of it) *Let him* remember
he hath a wise prouider, who as he needs not his sinne to
accompliſh his prouidence so he preserues from sinne
5 that we may be happily contained therein.

And let him in patience possesse his soule, looking with
Moyses to the recompence of the reward, that so he
may auoide the pleasures of sinne, and runne with ioye
the race that is set before him: Thus was *Hester* preser-
ued by the tuition of *Mordecai*. Thus found *Daniel* fauor
Obser. 59. in the eyes of the *Eunuch*, and so was kept vndefiled from
Of the change of names, and whether it be lawfull now for Christians to change their names. Genes. 41. Ioseph, Abraham, Sarah, Iacob, Israel. G. 32. Daniel &, Socis. 2 Reg. 23 et 24. Ioachim et Zedekiay.
the idolatrous meates.

But let vs proceed a little further, and consider who it
is that is nouriſhed by *Mordecai*, who it is that is brought
to so low an estate. It was *Hadassah*, that is *Hester*, euen she
that is after aduanced to the highest estate on earth.

Concerning this variety of names imposed on one per-
son, whether it were *by Mordecai* her Tutor as taking her
to be his child, or by the *King* at her marriage, to giue
her the more honour: For the thing it selfe, there is no
controuersie, but that the custome of changing names,
hath beene ancient, and laudable. And the reasons of
these changes, might be these.

1 Either some increase of blessings, a speciall fauour

which

which hath beene ſignified by ſuch changes, and this might be the reaſon why the Lord changed names.

2 Or ſome change of the outward condition, which was the reaſon why the conquered had their names changed. 3. Or to ſhew the power of the conquerors ouer them; ſo ſeruants when they were made free, had alſo their names changed.

4 Or laſtly ſome change of the inward condition, and ſo the names of Chriſtians where changed at their baptiſme, or at their conuerſion by our Sauiour Chriſt &c.

Vſe 1 Which howſoeuer it hath beene the practize of former times, and that vſed not onely by the heathen, but by God himſelfe, yet as many ſuch cuſtomes were particular to their time. 2. *So* I take it, this cuſtome is now ſo farre antiquated, as the ſpeciall cauſe thereof (namely the changing of names at Baptiſme) is now ceaſed. 3: *If* among vs any ſuch occaſion fall out, where Iewes and Turkes, &c. are to be conuerted, I ſee not but this liberty remaines ſtill. 4. *As* for vs who haue ſuch names impoſed on vs euen at our entrance in the world and Church, which ſhould be badges of our profeſſion, and prouoke vs to conſtancy therein: I ſee not why theſe in any ſort ſhould be changed, vnleſſe we thinke it lawfull to change our profeſſion with them.

Obſ. 60. Thoſe which are raiſed vp to greateſt dignities are vſually in moſt deſperate and low eſtate.

And is it then *Heſter* the Queene; that is *Heſter* the fatherleſſe? Is ſhe a miſerable captiue that was after a royall Empreſſe? muſt ſhe be nouriſhed by *Mordecai*, who after giues lawes to a mighty Kingdome? ſo was *Moyſes*, *Ioſeph* and the like: This is the Lords doing and it is admirable in our eyes.

1 This doth he in power worke, without and contrary to meanes to confound the pride of nature. 2. *This* doth he in wiſdome, that wee may aſcribe promotion to him. 3. *Nay* this he doth in loue, that we may giue him the glory, in being truly humbled with ſo great aduancement.

Vſe 1 Learne we here as not to preſume of meanes. 2. *So* not to diſtruſt the want of them *as to be* comforted in our loweſt

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1 loweſt eſtate, ſeeing it may be bettered, *ſo to* prepare for
2 ſound humiliation before we be truly exhalted. So was *Heſter* before ſhe was exhalted.

But what reaſon hath *Mordecai* to take this care of *Heſter*? Firſt it is ſaid ſhee was *His vncles daughter*.

The band of affinitie moued him to this duty, ſhee was his couſin Germaine, and therfore hee tooke charge of her.

1 A very good bond to inforce this duty, *not only* impoſed
Obſ.61. by God in this caſe vppon the like occaſions of widdow-
Kinred to bee relieued. hood.&c. *But very* agreeable to the law of nature, both being of our blood in a more particular manner, ſo that in
2 releeuing of them we keepe the true order of nature; and ſo performe therein honour to God and our ſelues, as
1 Rom. herein approuing our ſelues to haue *naturall affection*; the
2 Tim,3. want whereof is a maine challenge of impiety.

1 *Vſe.* This condemneth thoſe monſters in nature, y feed on their owne fleſh, deuouring their kindred, or leauing
1 them to the ſpoile: aboue all others affecting them left, and moſt vnnaturally preferring ſtrangers before them.

2 As alſo they are here reproued that preferre the naturall affinitie before the ſpirituall: And reiect the care of GODS Church vppon pretence of prouiding for their families.

3 And laſtly hereby wee may learne ſo to ſubdue nature, that we giue it alſo her right; *not* ſtripping our poſterity of their lawful inheritance, vppon pretence of preferring the ſpirituall affinitie, leaſt we burthen the Church and wrong our poſterity: but wiſely deuiding vnto each his right: our *children* their patrymony, and the *Church* her competencie; *in* equallitie of inward gifts, giuing nature her priuiledge, *and* God the glory in preferring greateſt bleſſings.

But had *Heſter* this need of reliefe from her Kinſman? Yea ſurely *it followeth*.

For ſhe had neither father nor mother.

A ſtranger ſhee was, and therefore to be releeued; a

Kinſwoman

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kinswoman she was, and therfore nature requires it but she was an *Orphane*, and therefore there was a necessitie in it.

Obs.62. Gods children left Orphanes in the world.

And surely such is the condition of the children of God, they are left fatherlesse and motherlesse: euen to the wide world. *And that* not without the speciall prouidence of God, who both may thus leaue them as it seemeth good to him; *And doth* this also for their exceeding good, that *forgetting* their Fathers house and the proppes of flesh they may more intirely depend vpon him, and haue better experience of his immediate prouidence.

Vse 1 And therefore: *let it* not be strange vnto vs, if God shall thus deale: neither *let vs* desire this day of affliction: some are sick of their parents, and in the end they are sick for them. *Let vs* make sure of God our father who now will take vs vp: *and* make much of our spirituall Fathers, who in Gods steed are set ouer vs: *Pray* we for the Magistrate who will be alwaies a father vnto vs, *and loue* we the Saints that they may be our Father: so shall we neuer want a Father, while God hath a Church and Kingdome, and he shall aduance vs his children to that glorious inheritance.

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Psal. 27
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But doth not God, make his seruant gratious in the eye of *Mordecai*, the better to moue him to the performance of this duety? Yea surely besides the inward beauty of her minde, where-with she was furnished to approue her to *Mordecai*: Behold the Lord adornes her with outward grace, and beauty, that so she might be fitter for that honor which after was cast vpon her: so it followeth.

Obser.63. The greater natures gifts need the greater bridles.

And the maide was faire and beautifull to looke one, That is, together with her beautie, she was *comely* and *well fauoured*; two notable outward graces of a yong Virgin: In regard whereof, as she had more need of a gardian, *Because* of natures aptnes to sinne vpon such a preuiledge, *And the forceable* battery that would be layd to her from without: so it pleaseth GOD to prouide for her accordingly.

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Vse 1

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Vse. 1. Which as it condemneth the practise of parents that vsually giue most liberty where natures gifts are more eminent, and put forth their beautifull children to the preferment of the world, as if their outward feature would be their preueledge and prouider, keeping their more humble children (as we say) at home vnder gouernment: *so it* is a notable lesson to all natures children that haue outward endouments aboue the other, that in this respect they most feare them-selues, and they rather carie a seuere hand ouer them-selues for these prieueledges; as knowing that such gifts not kept vnder, are but fuell to sinne; yea patterns thereof, and yet by restrayning of them they may be sanctified vnto vs.

2

Obs. 46. The gifts of nature being sanctified are good meanes to procure fauour and aduancement to Gods children

And surely, if it may please the Lord to sanctifie them vnto vs: may they not be furtherances for the bettering of our estate in the world; *yea surely*, as God giues them not in vaine, but to bee vsed in the world, so by this meanes they shall preuaile *as* both rightly vsed of vs *and so* worthily respected of GOD him-selfe: who both craueth his gifts with conuenient honour in this life, *and* makes the least of their steppes to aduance vs to eternall happinesse.

1

And therefore as this doth not warrant that whorish sophisticating of natures gifts by adulterous arts vpon pretence to set out nature in her glory, and to procure her aduancement: *so it* condemnes on the contrary, that obiect of defacing natures endowments, as if they were not Gods blessings but rather enemies to Godlinesse; *And so* out of these contraries we may learne a ciuell course, so to esteeme of these guifts as they further sanctification; and so to vse them as may stand therewith, *Namely* in a holy feare of them to be *humbled* in them, and the rather in regard of them both to stand in awe of God, *as also* to a voyde such occasions as may make them weapons vnto sinne, maintayning them daily by the word; and the examples of the most sober: and *wisely* considering the changeablenesse of them make we them seruants to inward graces and let their speciall

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Sect. 1. How to vse natures gifts aright.

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ciall grace and luſter be from thence ſo ſhall they ſerue vs to preuaile with God, and preuailing with God we ſhall alſo preuaile with Men, *well now* we ſee the reaſon why *Mordecai* takes vpon him the tuition of his kinſwoman: and that we may obſerue in him a care and conſcience more then ordinary, behold he not onely receaues her into his famile, and ſo deliuers her from miſery; but adopts her alſo as his child: both to giue her more ſecurity & alſo therby to fit her to further aduancement, as being now the reputed daughter of him, who was admitted one of the family of this great *Mordecai*: and that to a place of no meane truſt, euen to be keeper of the pallace. An office the likeler to be of mote *truſt*, by how much theſe *Perſian Princes* kept great eſtate, and were more iealous of their perſons: and thereby alſo not vnlikely to be more commodious in regard of the ſtricknesſe of acceſſe into the palace. *Behold* here a further act of the prouidence of God. Miſerable *Heſter* hath now a houſe to put her head in, and the fatherleſſe hath a father prouided for her by the Lord, *for ſait followeth, And after the death of her father and mother* Mordecai *tooke her for his owne daghter.*

Obſ. 65. It is lawfull to adopt.

See here the lawfulneſſe of this liberty of adoption. *Mordecai* adopted *Heſter* to be his daughter, *ſo* doth *Pharaohs daughter Moſes* to be her ſonne: *ſo* doth God in Chriſt Ieſus adopt vs to be his ſonnes: *A caſe* wherein the *mercy* and goodneſſe of God, is moſt comfortably manifeſted not onely *that the* adopter here by is ſupplied with the benefit of children, which are the bleſſing of God; and ſo ſtrenght of age in whoin he may receaue his life, and continew his poſterity; *but* hereby alſo the want and miſery of orphants is gratiouſly relieued, *and* that bleſſing of God is in part performed to a land that there ſhall be no begger in Iſrael. *And* doth not the Lord in this liberty prouoke vs to mercy? doth he not graciouſly make triall of our bowels of compaſſion by leauing vs to this liberty though hee commandes it not?

Gal. 4.

Adoption not commanded but a thing left to our liberty.

Doth

doth he not ſecure vs hereby of doing good ſeaſonably and conſcionably? *are not* vaine controuerſies preuented about dead mens goods? are not fooliſh hopes hereby wiſely cut of? and each man ſent to depend on Gods prouidence and worke out his liuing? ſurely though this may iuſtifie the lawfulneſſe of this liberty, yet becauſe we may abuſe the ſame to the maintenance of the fleſh, therefore are we to ſet bounds vnto this liberty, both in regard of the *perſons* that wee are to adopt, as alſo concerning *the end* of our adoption.

Sect. 2.

Who to be adopted.

Concerning the *perſons* we are to adopt, as here we may ſafely perſerre, our *kindred* before a ſtranger: ſo I take it we muſt haue herein a principal reſpect vnto the *ſpiritual affinity* if ſo be our kinne ſhall not be in apparant neceſſity: nay if the houſe-hold of faith be in like extremity, we are rather to make our choyce there, then any where elſe: becauſe *we* haue more and better bands to tye vs here: *And we* may with one compariſon looke for better ſucceſſe of our liberty; *And* which is eſpecially to be heeded of vs, becauſe *we* haue the example of our gratious God for our warrant therein; who as he onely adopts thoſe that were eternally beloued in his ſonne, ſo eſpecially when it is in our choice, we ought to make choiſe of ſuch for our children by adoption; who haue beſt euidence to be the ſonnes of God.

Thoſe eſpecially which being furniſhed with grace want meanes to imploy the ſame.

Vſe. 1. *Which as it* condemneth the practiſe of thoſe that ty them-ſelues in their choyce ſimply to their kindred, without reſpect of inward fitnes: whereas they might haue better choice in the Church; both for inward and outward guifts; *ſo I take it* hereby they do much croſſe the prouidence of God, which entending by this liberty the choyce of the moſt worthy, is hereby reſiſted, when the choyce is thus tied to the kindred.

Sect. 3. *Obiection.* God will prouide for his.

If it ſhall bee obiected that GOD will prouide for his, their gifts wil aduance them, and therefore I ought rather to prouide for ſuch as by reaſon of there impotency of gifts are like other-wiſe to ſticke by it: *indeed* as the impotencies of nature are to bee ſupplied,

ſo

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ſo her beſt gifts alſo as hath beene taught,) had need of a bridle of Tuition to reſtraine their priueledge, and ſo fit them to grace, but yet warily to be preſerued to the benifit of adoption, becauſe, as hereby their corruption is likely to be maintained, ſo without this benefit of adoption, ſuch as haue beſt gifts of nature, are moſt likely to ſhift in the world.

But for the gifts of grace, it is not ſo with them: they are hated of the world, and ſo make their owners hatefull: where then ſhall this be remedied? doſt thou ſay God will prouide for his, and therefore ile paſſe them by? I tell thee, God hath bountifully prouided for his: he hath giuen them his ſonne and ſo all is theirs, they haue a right in all, thou haſt no vſe but for their ſakes; thou art Gods ſteward for their good. Their is plenty in *Ægipt* to releeue the Church. *And how* ſhalt thou then better make thee friends of thy vnrighteous Mammon, then willingly to admit thoſe into the poſſeſſion thereof: who as they are expoſed to want to trie thy wiſdome herein, whether thou wilt ſanctifie thy eſtate or no, and take true comfort in thy ritches: ſo leſt the gathering of theſe things, might hinder them in better: therefore the Lord hath a time to put them into poſſeſſion without their labour whither thou wilt or no: though thou ſhouldeſt heape vp ſiluer as the duſt, and prepare rayment as the clay, thou maiſt prepare it, but the iuſt ſhal put it on and the innocent ſhall diuide the ſiluer.

1 Cor. 3. 22

Luk. 16

Iob. 26 16. 17.

And were it not better for thee when it is in thy choice, to make ſure thy habitation by this life, and ſo lay vp a good foundation againſt the day of Chriſt, receiuing God into thy family, in the adoption of his children: then by ſhutting out the Lord, thereby to ſhut thy ſelfe out alſo, not onely from the earth, but from heauen to: and yet al thy policy ſhalbe mightily confounded: *Iosephs* bretheren ſhall bow vnto him: and the righteous ſhalbe thy haires, whether thou wilt or no?

Vſe 2 And ſurely this doth no leſſe condemne the

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vanity of thoſe, that neglecting religion and onely ſeeking a name on earth, do therefore make choice of ſuch in this kind, as are of the name: reiecting alſo nature, & common humanity: Little do theſe men conſider that it is the *memoriall of the iuſt* onely, that ſhall endure for euer, as for the wicked, their name ſhall rot; and though they build them houſes, and call them after their names, though they adopt ſuch children, as may continue the name; yet looke we to the third generation if the place remaine in the name, nay conſider we wiſely, if the place it ſelfe can be found?

3. As for thoſe who adopt ſtrangers, and do alſo change their names, mooued thereby neither by the bond of *religion*, no not ſo much as *nature*, but rather by the *abuſe* of *nature* and fellowſhippe in euill: Though ſuch things ſhould not be named among Chriſtians, yet it is no meruaile, if like will loue their like, and ſociety in euill will haue a cloake for the maintenance thereof.

Sect. 4. Ends of adoption.

Thus farre of the perſons whom we muſt adopt.

Now for the ends we muſt propoſe herein; propoſing principally the glory of GOD, the furtherance of religion and releeuing of the truely afflicted; we may here alſo in a ſecond place reſpect preſent comfort herein and future propagation of poſterity, being wiſely purged of ſecurity and vaine-glorie.

Well thus we haue *Heſter* now the adopted daughter of *Mordecai*, and ſo by Gods good prouidence this Orphane is well prouided for.

And hath not the Lord much better prouided for vs; whom he hath in Chriſt Ieſus adopted to be his children, and ſo to be heires with him of eternall glory? Oh that we would therefore walke worthy of ſo high a calling; that we would behaue our ſelues as ſonnes of ſo gratious a Father? Surely *Heſter* in all her glory is not like the meaneſt of the ſonnes of God: and the leaſt in the Kingdome of heauen is greater then *Salomon* in all his Maieſty.

Well

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Well, let this be our comfort, that though it be not our lot to meete with a *Mordecai* to be adopted to an earthly Kingdome, yet we haue such an enheritance, which all the world cannot depriue vs of. And let vs make triall of our adoption by our *strange cries* vnto our Father. Let this straight appeare by *iustifying his cause*. Let his cause be maintained by *increasing his kingdome*, and his kingdome being come, *Let vs lift vp our heads* that his will may be done in earth as it is in heauen; that God may bee all in all.

Sect.5. State of adoption in Christ how discerned. 1 2 3 4

Obser.66. Orphanes are to beprouided for and how. Psal.109

And surely though it be a curse vnto the wicked to be left as Orphanes, yet it is but a temperall iudgement, and so may befall (and hath) to the Godly, and therefore though the wicked being Orphanes shall seeke their bread, and desolate places, yet GOD is the helper of the Fatherlesse, yea he is a Father vnto them. And therefore as he hath giuen expresse commandement that they should not be hurt, lest the like iudgement befall the oppressors, so hath the Lord also precisely inioined that releese and succour, and that not onely vncertainely as strangers by starres, and at their solemne festiuities, when by reason of the aboundance, it is not so thankes worthy; but as those within their gates and of their household that are to haue a free and setled maintenance; as hauing a continuall set prouision allotted thereto: *Oh* what a sanctifying is this of our prosperitie! *What* a comfort in our troubles? *What* a sacrifice to God? what a sweet sauour to man? *What* peace doth it breed at home? *What* true honor abroad.

Deu.10,18 Psal.9,19 Psal.68.5. Exod.22.22 24 Deu.16,11 Deut.24. 19 20 21 Iob.29 The benifit thereof.

Vse 1. Well, *Let this* be a glorious crowne to those Cities and persons who haue set harbours for Orphanes and strangers: *And let* it be the glorie of true religion that it hath taught such places and persons Christian duetie: *Let* the *Ostrich* be ashamed that leaues her egges in the sand, *and let* vnnaturallnesse be confounded that forsaketh her owne: *Cruelty* bee condemned that makes the fatherlesse: *and let oppression*

2 3 4 5

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6 ſtoppe her mouth that turnes the fatherleſſe out of their
owne: deteſt we ſuch trechery that makes tuition a
7 broker for priuate gaine: *and* take we heed of hipocriſie
that ſecretly deuoures where it pretends deuotion; and
in ſteed of Children makes ſlaues or ſpunges of their pu-
8 pils: I would our *encloſers* could waſh their hands from
9 this ſinne, and *do not gardians* of wards trample deepe
herein? Wel let vs not liue by examples but by lawes; & let
good example prouoke vs to the obedience of them. *Mor-
decai* takes vpon him the tuition of this orphane: now let vs
ſee what ſucceſſe he hath herein, it followeth.

Verſ. 8 *And when the Kings commandement, and his decree was publiſhed, and many maides were brought together to the palace of* Suſhan *vnder the hand of* Hege: Heſter *was brought alſo vnto the Kings houſe vnder the hand of* Hege *the keeper of the women.*

In which words the holie Ghoſt ſetteth downe a ſe-
cond meanes, by which *Heſter* is aduanced to the Court.
Namely ſhe is taken in the generall ſuruay, according
to the Kings commandement, and ſo togither with thoſe
many other Virgins, that were choſen out by theſe of-
ficers out of all the Kings dominions: ſhe is brought to
the Court; And ſo the Kings commandement and the
thorough execution thereof, is a ſecond meanes of her ad-
uancement.

And ſurely, if we conſider the end of this commande-
ment: *Namely* that the King might haue a wife: if we
obſerue the equity thereof; that he might make choice
of his wife where it pleaſed him; throughout his domi-
nions; if we wiſely examine the lawfulneſſe of theſe Of-
ficers imployment in this buſineſſe, and ſucceſſe therein:
all theſe will witneſſe vnto vs that *Heſter* had a lawfull cal-
ling to the *Court*, the meanes of her aduancement were
honeſt and honorable.

Shee is not *thruſt vpon* the Court, to bee a prey
thereto, neither doth ſhe *buſely ſeeke* to it, to make ſale of
her chaſtitie, ſhee *followes* it not to catch a fall by it,
but

but the court followes her, and seekes her out: As *Daniel* was sent for, and *Ioseph* fetcht out of prison, so she is sent for to the Court: GOD guiding the generall intent of the King to his particular purpose; and so reseruing the issue to his speciall prouidence, that though shee might feare the worst, to become the Kings *concubine*, yet she might hope the best, to be receiued as his *wife*: and so the ease being doubtfull and the daunger not being inuincible; she was to cast her selfe vpon the prouidence of GOD, for a good issue of that which might threaten euill; as vndoubtedly perswading her-selfe, that as she beleeued, so it should come vnto her.

Obs.67. God aduanceth his children by faire and likely meanes.

Behold then the mercy of GOD, in the aduancement of his Children: the meanes thereto shalbe faire and likely: *Hester* shall haue natures guiftes, to fit her to the Kings bedde, *Shee* shalbe seasoned with affliction to beare her greatnesse more wisely, *Shee* shalbe trained vp in religion vnder a gratious Tutor, that so hauing fauour with GOD, she may preuaile with man: *And* the authority of the Prince shall call her to the Court, that so she may be warranted both from God, and man; so was *Moyses*, *Mordecai* and the rest. And all this to two speciall ends; *Namely*, that they may be cleered from *ambition* & *intrusion*, two encrochers on greatnes, and dangerous enemies thereto, that enuy may be remoued, the moath of aduancement, that *pride* may be abandoned which wil make their fal the greater: that hauing hereby an *euidence* of their *holy entrance* to dignity, they might haue better vse, and longer continuance thereof.

Vse 1 *A notable lesson*, for all aspirers, that they wait such holy and likely meanes, as GOD hath sanctified thereto, not *thrusting* themselues to preferment. Not *hunting* greedily after the same, not by base *flattery*, and *detraction* to clime into fauour: Neither by *sordid corruption* to blind-fold greatnesse. But wisely to esteeme their fitnesse by *gifts* both inward, and outward: and yet to *wait* with

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8 with comfort a lawfull thereto: *not neglecting such*
9 *gracious opertunities* as GODS prouidence doth offer, neither *resisting* such *necessarie meanes*, as may be vnlikely thereto.

For to examine a little further the case of *Hester*: the King commandeth; must she not obey? is it not lawfull for a subiect to come to a prophane Court? is it vnlawfull for a religious person to haue her abode among the wicked? especially, where the prouidence of GOD doth extraordinarily cast her, and no present iniquity lying therein? A necessity lies vpon her and she cannot refuse. Surely Gods children are to yeeld to the necessity of more where as their is a prouidence of GOD to ouer-rule them to good: and our yeelding thereto, is not simplie euill. 1. *Because* all this while we keepe our selues within the compasse of Gods protection whereby we shalbe sure to be secured our selues.

Obs.68. Gods children are to yeeld to present necessity keeping themselues from apparent euil and depending on Gods protection.

2. *And what* know we also, whether the Lord hath herein a further worke to vse our Ministery for the good of others? was it not so with *Hester*, *Daniel* and the like? *If it shall be said*; that the King had no good intent therein, because no doubt he ment hereby to supplie the number of his concubines, and it might haue beene *Hesters* lot, to haue beene one of them.

Surely this being but coniecturall, *and* the publike purpose of the King being to make choice of a wife: *and* God intending that purpose to preuaile, why might not *Hester* safely rest vpon this knowne purpose, and so commit her selfe into the hand GOD, for the issue thereof? *If it shalbe said*, that the best intent was bad; namely that Hester *should marry an* Infidel. *Surely* as this cannot chalendge the Kings purpose, which was simply to choose a wife, *so neither* may it preiudice Gods prouidence, who knowing what he would do, prouides this meanes to bring his purpose to passe: As for *Hester* this was more then yet she knew of (when she knowes of it you shall heare her Apology.) As yet she hath little reason of any

such

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ſuch hope, and therefore ſhe will herein yeeld to neceſſity; becauſe the Lord might aſwell preſerue her vndefiled in the Court, as he had done before in the houſe of her kinſwoman.

Vſe And therefore as herein ſhe ſeemes to be blameleſſe, becauſe ſhe yeelds that, which might turne either to good or euill when ſhe could not otherwiſe chooſe: ſo herein ſhe doth teach vs. An excellent point of wiſdome in our obedience. *That* as we muſt obey rather God then man: ſo we muſt yeeld to man, when there is no apparant diſobedience to God. *We muſt* not caſt, what may be, ſeeing God may ouer-rule: leſt while we nouriſh feare, we betray our faith: *neither muſt we demur* with our ſuperiors, where our ſelues are *vncertaine*; but yeeld wee ſo to neceſſitie, that we ſtill depend on *our God*: who will accept our obedience, and giue a good iſſue thereto. So did *Daniell* and God preſerued him vndefiled. So did *Heſter* and the Lord gaue a bleſſing. 1 2

And yet ſurely not without great difficulties and extremities: the nerer ſhe came to it, the greater were her dangers: Firſt, her bodie is in hazad by being left fatherleſſe, God heere ſupplies and ſhe is receiued into *Mordecaies* familie: who together with her bodie, prouides principally for her ſoule. Here ſhe ſaies no, being where ſhe hath greateſt comfort, but ſhortly ſhe is remoued out of heauen euen into hell, to a prophane Court ſhe is called, where Sathan hath his throne. And to what end I pray you? ſurely *reaſon* and *likelihood* can giue neither, but to the apparant diſtruction both of bodie and ſoule.

Obſ.69. God: children, the nee-rer preferment the greater extremities. Exod. 1 Exod. 5 Cap. 5. Heſt. Geni. 45.

Thus the nerer Gods children approch to their comfort & preferment; the greater are their dangers, the more deſperate their extremities. So was it with the *Iſraelits* before their deliuerance. Their burdens were increaſed, their ſtraw was taken away; and then came *Moyſes*, then came the deliuerance. So was it with *Mordecai*, with *Ioſeph* and the reſt: And no maruaile?

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For by this it appeares their promotiõs is of God, by how much the greater they finde the oppoſitions, to the ſame, that ſo hee may haue onely the glory of their aduancement: *this* makes Satan to rage the more, that ſo if it bee poſſible hee may hinder the good of the Saintes: *hereby* the wicked are more confounded, in the diſapoyntment of their mallice, and *hereby* GODS Children are better fitted to their preferment, and ſo are prouided to make better vſe thereof.

2

4

Vſe. Whereby as Gods children are taught not to bee diſcouraged, if their afflictions doe ſtill increaſe vppon them, becauſe if deliuerance approach not, yet patience ſhall increaſe, to make the deliuerance more glorious when it comes; *So are* they to increaſe their faith as their temptations doe increaſe, by more earneſt *prayer*, and *examining of them-ſelues*, *more abaſing them-ſelues*, and *increaſing* conſtancy in wel-doing, that ſo they may haſten the worke, and bee fitted thereto.

2.

Thus was *Heſter* brought at length from *Mordecaies* houſe to the Court, that in this fierie furnace (beeing throughly purged) ſhee might bee fitte for the worke that GOD had appoynted, ſo meruailous is the LORD to turne all thinges to the good of his children; ſuch difference doth hee make betweene them and the wicked, that as the beſt bleſſinges doe make the wicked wiſe, ſo the greateſt occaſions of euil do make his children better, when neceſſarily they are caſt vpon them.

Obſ. 70. God prepares his church by afflicts to great bleſſings.

And ſurely if wee ſhall wiſely obſerue the prouidence of God herein; that though *Heſter* is brought to the Court, a place of liberty and prouocation to euill: yet ſhee is reſtrained in the Court, vnder the *hand of a Keeper*, and as it were clapt vp in a glotious priſon, being not to come abroad but when the King calls, nor to frequent any ſociety, but ſuch as is appointed her for her

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her necessary attendance and comfort; doth not this exceedingly magnifie the mercy of GOD, that vseth this as a preseruatiue against the infection of the place, and so euen therein sanctifies her comming thether? Had shee beene exposed to the liberty of the Court? might accesse haue beene free vnto her? As her tryall had beene the greater, so her danger must needes bee the greater.

Obs. 71. God breakes the force of temptations and prouideth preseruatiues against them.

And therefore behold here the faithfulnesse of Almightie God to his children; that considering whereof wee are made, and what wee can indure, though hee cast vs into the Furnace, yet he quallifies the rage of the fire, or else applyeth preseruatiues that it shall not hurt vs. So doth hee here prouide for his seruant *Hester*, because her beautifull youth beeing exposed to applause and liberty in the Court, might be a meanes of taynting her; therefore hee makes the place of her aduancement, the place of her imprisonment, that so the *lust of the eye* and *pride of life*, and such like temptations might want their nourishment, and so without wood the fire might be quenched.

So when the Lord had brought *Ioseph* into the land of his aduancement, that the pride and fulnesse of the Country might not corrupt him; Hee is cast *first vppon Putiphers familie*: Where though he receiues no small preferment, yet it is sauced with such temptations, as might greeuously humble the heart of his seruant. *And* yet is hee further sent to the *prison*, where the yrons might enter into his soule, to his further humiliation: *Yea* when hee is aduanced, hee hath an *Office* to humble him, whereby hee is both kept from the *Court*, the place of temptation, and also from *idlenesse* the roote of all euill. And was not this a great humbling to *Hester* in the flesh, that her glorious beautie must bee pinned vp from being seene? shee must bee kept as a prisoner, when libertye was so pleasant; And yet the worke of the Lord

most

moſt admirable herein; both to keepe her ſtaxe (as I may ſay) from the fire, and by a leſſe affliction to preuent a greater.

1 *Vſe.* Oh that wee would therefore praiſe the Lord for his faithfulneſſe and obſerue his gratious prouidence in the quallifying of our temptations!

That we would reſt vppon our God, in the greateſt
2 extremities, *and* wiſely admit leſſer chaſtiſments to pre-
3 uent greater. *Surely* there is no temptation hath quer-
4 taken vs, but ſuch as appertaineth to man, and God is
1 Cor. 10. 13. faithfull, which will not ſuffer vs to be tempted aboue our ſtrength: but will euen giue the iſſue with the temptation, that wee may bee able to beare it.

And therefore admit the worſt that may be ſayd in this caſe: Say it was her great affliction to bee brought to the Court; and her greater affliction to bee in danger of defiling: and therefore her infirmitie to put her ſelfe into this danger (although I cannot ſee how ſhe could auoyd it) (ſo deſperate is their caſe liuing vnder prophane gouernement) yet ſeeing God bringes light out of darkeneſſe, and turnes our infirmities to his glory and out good: Nay ſeeing hee iuſtifies particular actions by extraordinary inſtants, which wee being ignorant off, are therefore to keepe ſilence in: why ſhall we cenſure that, of the ground whereof wee may bee ignorant? VVhy doe wee not rather giue our God the glories, whereof the infirmities of his children, raiſeth meanes for their ſtrength, and hereby makes way for his abſolute glory?

Well thus wee haue heard of ſome of the outward meanes of *Heſters* aduancement. *Namely* Mordecaies *nouriſhing of her*, and her *bringing* to the Court. Now lette vs further conſider of her intertainment in the Court, and ſo of ſome meanes wherby ſhe fitted is to the marriage bed. *It followeth.*

Vers. 9. *And the maid pleaſed him, and ſhe found fauour in his ſight*

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ſight and to ſhew that he was pleaſed, hee cauſed her thinges for purification to bee giuen her ſpeedily, and her ſtate and ſeauen comely maidens to bee giuen her out of the Kinges houſe, and he gaue change to her and to her maids of the beſt in the houſe of the women.

In which words the holy Ghoſt ſettes downe vnto vs a third ſteppe to *Heſters* aduancement. *Namely*, that ſhe findes fauour in the ſight of the Keeper of the Maidens. By which meanes it was likely that the King beeing much ledde by his iudgement and commendation, would cal for her more ſpeedily to his preſence, and ſo conſequently preferre her.

And there is in the word contained *two ſpeciall thinges*. 1. The fauor that *Heſter* findes with the *Eunuch*, teſtified by a variety, and increaſe of ſpeach; not onely the *Maide pleaſed him (but) ſhee found fauour in his ſight*. 2. there are ſet down the vndoubted ſignes of his fauour in that liberall and extraordinary allowance which hee affordes her for her maintenance, *in the reſt of the Verſe*.

And ſurely that ſhee findes this extraordinary fauour in the ſight of the Eunuch, who was likely to be a meanes of her ſpeedy aduancement.

This magnifieth the gratious prouidence of Almightie God, who hauing the hearts of all men in his handes to diſpoſe them as hee pleaſeth; doth therfore incline the heart of this ſtranger, to affect this beautifull maiden, *that* ſo ſhee might haue more liberty in this time of her reſtraint; *and* more ſecurity alſo againſt ſuch dangers as ſuch places doe threaten.

Obſ. 72. Gods children find fauour in ſ eyes of ſtrangers.

So gratious is godlyneſſe euen in the eyes of the wicked, *ſo* doth the Lord ſtill ſort the meanes for the effecting of his righteous will; *that* the weakeneſſe of our faith might be ſupplyed hereby; *and* he might haue the glory of his truth and faithfulneſſe.

1 2 3 4

1. *Vſe.* Wherby we are taught *as* to ſhew fauor vnto ſtrangers

strangers, and such as are in affliction. *So* not to despaire
2 the reconciling most bitter enemies, seeing our God can make this *Eunuch* to affect a poore captiue, how shall not he also turne the hearts of our enemies towards vs. *And therefore* let vs not prouoke an enemie by vp-
3 brayding to keepe him further off, but rather draw we him nerer vnto vs by praier, and kindnesse. *Labour* we
4 to please our God, so shall his heart be turned towards vs.
5 *And* make we much of friends, seeing the loue of enemies is so doubtfull. *Especially*, make we much of the
6 houshold of faith, who when they wound vs do not meanely befriend vs, and yet thats the greatest enmity we feare from them. *As* for our enemies they shalbe
7 cloathed with shame, and though they shall iustifie vs so farre forth as may make for Gods glorie and our good, yet this shall make to their further condemnation, that they shall like of those, whom they do not desire to bee like; they shall loue vs for such blessings as GOD bestoweth on vs, and yet not loue God with vs that they in like manner may be blessed.

Well thus *Hester* finds fauour in the eye of this *Eunuch*: But how doth this appeare? It followeth. *He makes hast to giue her things for her purification*: he is not kinde in shew, but he performeth it in deed: and that we may know his willingnes, he causeth it to be done *speedily*, yea he *enlargeth him selfe*, and euen stretcheth his authority; he encreaseth her attendance, and *giues her seauen comely maides out of the Kings house, yea he gaue change to her and to her maides of the best in the house of the woman*; and all this to make good the truth and greatnesse of his fauour towards her.

Obs. 73. Wicked haue the shadowes of many excellent vertues and may in some sorte teach true kindnesse.

Thus euer the wicked haue their shadowes of excellent vertues: yea they haue some relikes of the true inconstancies required therein. They are not onely kinde in *words*, but they make it good in deeds: yea they are *cherefull* in weldoing, and *bountifull* therein.

Vse 1. Which though it will not any thing iustifie them

but

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but rather tend to their greater condemnation: becauſe they fooliſhly content themſelues with this dimme light of nature: which onely concernes this preſent life, and will not embrace the light of grace, which would lead them to glory. *Yet* ſhall euen theſe Gentiles condemne many Chriſtians, who as they vſually *boaſt of falſe liberalitie*, making great ſhewes in words, and performing little in deed: *So* when they do any thing the Children of God taſt leaſt of their bountie: they of all other are ſhut from their fauours: nay I would the worſt they could do were not good enough for them: I would they *thought they did not God good ſeruice* when they entertaine his Saints with greateſt outrage. Surely though religion muſt not teach them to fauour their contraries, yet wiſdome might leſſon them, herein to prouide for themſelues. Do not they fare the better for the Saints of God? and ſhall they fare the worſe by them? will they remoue them out of the gappe, who keepe away their ſcourges, and are the onely meanes to maintaine their proſperity? Oh that the world would learne to be wiſe! but he that is filthy wilbe filthier ſtill.

2 3 4

Ioh. 16. 2

Obſe. 74. Markes of true liberality.

Laſtly from theſe ſhadowes of bounty we may learne the true ſubſtance thereof. Not onely *in words but* in deed to make good our kindneſſe, and that not *forcibly*, or *with grudging*, but cheerefully; and that not *ſparingly and baſely* but bountifully and with a large hand: and if wee ſhall doe this from the true *ground becauſe GOD hath commanded*; and to a right *end*, namely that God may be glorified, and our neighbours bettered, thre ſhall not be any thing wanting to true liberality: but of this heretofore. That which may further be commended in the *Eunuch* is his faithfulneſſe in his office. In that he makes not priuate gaine of ſuch prouiſion as was allowed to theſe Maidens, but rather enlargeth himſelfe in the true beſtowing thereof.

Obſ. 75. Officers are to be faithfull in diſtributing according to their charge.

So was *Ioſeph* faithful in diſtribution of the corne: ſo was *Iacob* faithfull, vnder his vnkle *Laban*. A notable preſident

to

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Obser. 75. Officers are to be faithfull in distributing according to their charge. A good lesson for Iustices, Captains, Gardian for the poore, Treasureres of prouision for the publique good. &c.

to all officers, that are put in trust for the behoose of others that they lick not their own fingers, & fil there own rooses with that which should serue for the prouision of others.

Vse. 1. Which as it condemneth all *Zibaes*, and *Iudasses*, that caried the bagge for their priuate profit, and like false *stewards* rob others to prouide for themselues, *so* it aduiseth Princes to appoint sufficiēt stipēds for such kind of officers, ỳ they need not fal to such shameless oppressions. *And also* teacheth such persons to be content with their allowance, & to esteeme it their greatest glory, ỳ their charge prospers vnder them, least ỳ leane kine deuour the fat, the wrongs of ỳ oppressed cry for vengeance against them. *That* so honorable an attēdance is graūted to this poore captiue, who so lately lived at ỳ best but a seruant in the house of her vncle, this as it serueth much to ỳ commendation of the Eunuches bounty, in whose power no doubt it was to haue contented her with one, so doth it much more commend the mercy of God vnto this his seruant: that in this glorious seruitude shee there hath this benefit of such society which as shee might better rule, hauing ferme power ouer them, so she might lesse feare, as being of her owne sex: which as it might giue her some hope of her further aduancement, as being yet a further steppe thereto, so therein we may obserue the wisedome of our good and gracious God, who as he doth not suddenly cast his vpō preferment, but by degrees raiseth vs thereto, that so we might the better wield the same, so in this manner of his prouidēce doth he much quickē our faith and patience, that seeing him comming wee might not be hasty, but wait the good time that he hath appointed. *Concerning* ỳ kind of attendance that here is tendred to *Hester*, only such of her sex as being fittest thereto: this howsoeuer in this case might haue iealosie for it ground, yet hath it a good ground for the like fitnes in our attendance, that they should be such as be of our owne sex. *the eie of the seruant to looke vpō the hand of his maister, & the eie of a maidē vnto the hand of her mistres*, a matter politickely obserued in popery to take away suspition, at least of vncleanes, yet surely euen this.

Obs. 76. God raiseth his to preferment by degrees.

Obj 77. Attendance what fit for each sex. Psal. 123.

Obs. 78. God giues signes of his fauour to his children.

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this policy ſhal cõdemne that prophanes, wher there is not this care of fitnes both to preſerue order, & comlines in the family, and alſo to auoide occaſions, and apparances of euil.

Laſtly that to *Heſter* and her maides is giuen charge of the beſt in the houſe, howſoeuer this may be imputed to the carnal & blind affection of the Eunuch, reſpecting eſpecially herein the beauty and likelines of *Heſter*, yet we may here-in behold a ſpecial point of Gods wiſdome ỳ *Heſter* being aduanced to the higheſt dignity, might haue a pledge hereof in the beſt preferment that the Eunuch could giue her, and ſo by this liberall and ſutable maintenance might be fitted therto. So ſhal not the children of God want ſignes of their faith, to helpe there weakenes, & confirme their faith, wher-by we may learne as not to deſire a ſigne when the thing is before vs, ſo not to refuſe a ſigne whē God offers it vnto vs, and wiſely to obſerue ỳ tracts of Gods prouidence, which will not fayle vs with plaine ſignes of his loue towards vs.

Obſe.79. The beſt is due and beſtowed on Gods children.

Veſ. 2 3 4 5

And doth not this alſo commend the exceeding faithfulneſſe of God vnto his; that as all is theirs in Ieſus Chriſt, ſo they aboue any other, ſhal ſo farre enioy this right, euen in this life, as that the beſt and fatteſt ſhal be their portion. *So* had *Iacob* and his famile the beſt of the land of Egypt: *ſo* had *Iacobs* poſterity the moſt fruitefull country of the world: *ſo* haue ỳ Saints of God had this their right renewed that the Goſpell hath taken place euen in the beſt inheritance, what country may compare in happines with thoſe where the word hath beene entertayned? *So* righteous is the Lord to giue his children the beſt in this life to aſſure vnto them the enioying of the better, *ſo* profitable is Godlineſſe to be recompenced with the beſt gaine: haue not the children of God ſhared euen with the beſt & of the beſt? ſhall not the widow giue the Prophet before ſhe releeue her ſelfe? Shall not *Ioſeph* haue the *next beſt chariot*, and *Mordecai* the horſe that the King rides on? *Oh* that we could beleeue, how ſhould we be eſtabliſhed! *How* ſhould wee enuy the beſt if we could hope the beſt, *that* our iniquities did not many times depriue vs of the beſt: *that* the world ſhould thinke the worſt to good for the beſt.

6 7 8 9

Surely

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5 *Surely* though wee haue not the beſt in it ſelfe, yet con-
6 tedneſſe may make it the beſt to vs: *And if we be faithful* in
vſing the leaſt, we may by Gods mercy attain to the beſt:
7 *let* this be our comfort that wee ſhall haue whats beſt for
8 vs: *and* therein if wee liue by faith, we may take hold of
9 the beſt inheritance: *onely* waite we the Lords leyſure, and
hee will giue vs our hearts deſire: *and* reſigne our ſelues
alwaies into the handes of our moſt gratious father, who
only knoweth whats beſt for vs.

Well thus is *Heſter* now prouided honourably for in ſ̄ houſe of the maidens. How doth ſhee now behaue her ſelfe to keepe her in fauor? *Doth* ſhe reueale her country, which was odious to theſe Gentiles? *Doth* ſhee conceale her religion, which was to theſe abhomination? *Or* doth ſhe fal to temporiſing after ſ̄ manner of the Court? *Doth* ſhe forget her former affliction, and ſo grow headſtrong? *Doth* ſhee now hauing changed her keeper, change her obedience? Hearken I pray you what the holy Ghoſt ſaith of her.

Verſ. 10. *But* Heſter *ſhewed not her people nor her kinred*: That is
Verſ. 10. ſhe did not make knowne that ſhe was a *Iew; nay* ſhe did not diſcouer ſhe was *Mordecais Kinſwoman.*

Wherby it is apparant that it was not yet knowne, ſo the reaſon of this concealment may be coniectured to be this; *namely* that had *Heſter* yet bene knowne to be a Iew; ſhe might inſteed of good intertainment, receiue both diſhonour and diſgrace too; as beeing in regard of her country moſt abhominable to theſe Gentiles. Reaſon therefore
Obſ. 80. ſhe might haue to conceale her country, and ſurely ſuch I
Truth may be concealed how, &c. take it as may ſtand well with religion. Which though it inioyneth vs a true profeſſion of truth in the ſimplicity of our hearts, when wee are to giue an account of our faith: it allowes vs alſo in ſpirituall wiſdome to conceale the truth, when it may ſtand 1. with *Gods glory*, 2. *the ſatisfying of others*, 3. *ad ſecuring of our ſelues*, 4. *without the preiudice to the truth*; and iuſt ſcandall to our profeſſion, eſpecially when we are not queſtioned thereof. So doth

Samuel

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Samuel and *Moyſes* conceale part of truth: *So* doth the Prophet *Eliſha* conceale the whole truth; when meeting with the meſſenger of the *Kings of Syria* who were ſent of purpoſe to ſeeke him; inſteed of telling them, that hee was the man (which hee wiſely conceales) hee tels them that that was not the way, nor that the Towne, in all which hee ſpake truth; but if they would follow him, hee would lead them to the man they ſought for. So doth *Heſter* here wiſely conceale the truth, *becauſe ſhee* is 1 neither demanded the matter, *and* the conceaſing therof 2 would further her ſafety; *And* ſurely as none is to bring 3 vnneceſſary troubles on himſelfe by reuealing of what may bee lawfully hidden; ſo *by ſuch* concealments both 4 much glory hath redounded to the truth, *and* alſo Gods 5 Children hereby reſerued to better times: and therfore *ſo we* intend not to ſmother the truth by our preſent concealment thereof, but only to refer the diſcouery to it fit oportunity: *ſo we* are not *aſhamed* of the truth of God, but onely conceale it that it may not bee reproached: *So we* do not by ſilence betray the truth, but rather by this holy wiſdome keepe it from treachery: *So we* deny not our profeſſion, but only defend our perſon: *So we* indammage not our neighbour by concealing the truth: *So we* intend not only the auoyding of danger, but rather purpoſe to do the moſt good hereby. Surely vpon theſe grounds (I take it) truth may be concealed, eſpecially if it be a truth concerning only ciuil occaſions. And this was the caſe of *Heſter* in this place: ſhe conceales not her religion, ſhe denies not her profeſſion; but onely not being demaunded, ſhee reueales not her country nor her kinred, both ciuill things.

Exod. 5. 1. Samuel. 16.

Cautions to be obſerued in concealing the truth.

2 3 4

Obiect. If it ſhall be demanded how ſhe could conceale her country, ſeeing her diet and religion which could or ſhould not be hid, muſt needs declare it though ſhe hold her peace (as *Daniel* and his followers euen by this were neceſſarily diſcouered) And therfore it was vnpoſſible to conceale her country: vnleſſe you wil ſay, ſhee framed in her diet an outward ceremony of religion, to the preſent

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time, & so she would proue no lesse then a deep dissebler.

Ans. Surely as wee may not in any case iustifie dissembling, so I doubt not but we may very well cleare *Hester* from the same, if we consider that in some things, her diet might be answerable to the place wherein shee liued (the *Iew* agreeing with the Gentile in the promiscuous eating of the most things) and so by ỹ her country might not be discouered. The greatest doubt is concerning her religion: how she could conceale her country, vnlesse shee also concealed this; and if she concealed her religion, how she could practise it: which (in my opinion) may be easily resolued, if we consider her present condition, who liuing priuate might wel performe her deuotiõs, and yet not be obserued, especially hauing now no other meanes and liberty to practise her religion, but such as might well bee performed secretly in her closet, onely in the presence of her God. *If* it shal be imputed vnto her, ỹ she should haue made a bold profession of her nation and religion, therby the rather to free her from that present bondage, and so to preuent her future defiling, rather chooſing to be disgraced and cast out of the Court again, then to indure ỹ pleasure of sinne for a season.

Doubt.

Answer.

Obs. 81. Religion when & how to be giuen account off. 1. Pet. 3. 15.

Surely concerning the profession of our religion, as ỹ Apostle would haue vs principally readie thereto, that so in due season we may publish the same: so he seemeth to aime at a speciall season, namely when we are demaunded a reason of our hope. And therefore though no doubt this seruant of God was ready to giue an account of her religion, yet (I take it) now it was not a fitt season, because she was not demanded the same of any: If you say, her own case did now especially require it, ỹ she might be deliuered from ỹ imminent danger. Surely for any danger wherein yet she was, I see not but she was to vndergo the same with patience: as being so farre subiect to gouernement, as might stand with the saluation of her soule: as for future dangers, concerning her defiling, &c. though they were likely in regard of man, yet if wee looke vp to God, might

might not they be preuented? Especially seeing she walked on her wayes, she yet did no more then *necessitie*, and her *dutie* imposed vpon her: and therefore might safely waite vppon the protection of her God: That happily she did not here abstaine from all *appearance of euill*, that shee did not auoid the occasiõs therto; this being a thing that was not now in her choyce, as wee may not rashly condemne her for the same, so what know we whether by some extraordinary instinct, shee was incouraged and warranted herein. So that in her *that* may be iustifiable, which of vs simply is not to be immitated. And surely the weakenesse of *Hester* must needs commend highly ỹ faithfulnesse of God to his children, who as he is not diuerted from his purpose towards them by their infirmities, so doth hee in his special prouidence vse the same in the contriuing of his work, ỹ he may haue the only glory of the accomplishmẽt therof.

Obs. 82. God vieth the weakenes of his children in the accomplishment of his mercies towards them.

Vse. 1. VVherby wee may learne that there is a time to hold our peace as wel as to speak, & when we may safely conceale a truth. 2. We may obserue the bounds of lawful subiection, that we so far obey the magistrate as may stand with the safety of our soules. 3. VVe may contemplate ỹ absolute power of God, in giuing his children extraordinary dispensations euen beyond his righteous law, that so we may not feare ỹ pardon of our sins, if in weakenesse they be committed against the law of God. Lastly, we see here an holy vse of our infirmities; *not* that wee should presume here-vpon to sin: *But* rather that hereby our faith being increased we may get dayly from Christ Iesus more strength against sin, *not* measuring Gods faithfulnesse by our desart, but by the eye of faith, looking for light out of darkenes, that so God may haue the glory of all his mercies. Thus doth *Hester* conceale her country and her kindred too. But by whose aduise doth she this? *He followeth.*

For Mordecai had charged her that she should not tell it.

Lo here the cause of *Hesters* silence: her *foster-father Mordecai* had giuen her this in charge: & among many other holy instructions, which he had furnished her withal, that so she might be better armed against the abuses of the Court: this was one especiall, that shee should rule her tongue, and especially herein impose silence on her selfe, & she discouer not her Nation, nor her fathers house.

Obs. 83. Gods children season one another with graue counsel & wholesome instructions.

Wherein, 1. wee may see a notable practise of the Saints of God, *Namely* to season their tender plants with good counsell, and wholesome instruction: when they are to leaue the wing (as wee say) and trye the world. So doth *Dauid* counsell *Salomon*; and *Ioseph* his brethren; so doth *Iacob* his children. This is the best legacie they can bequeath vnto them: hereby they shew their vnfainednesse of their loue, and so arme them gratiously against this present euill world.

Whereby we may learne to sette forth our children, and friendes into the world: not so much prouiding stockes, and such furniture for the body, as especially with good counsell to arme the soule; as knowing that if *it* be secured the other shall not want, and the full prouision for the body, may bee a meanes to expose the soule naked to all temptations.

But what is the summe of this councell that *Mordecai* giues to *Hester*? Surely silence, the chiefe outward ornament of women and keeper of their chastitie, the gouernment of the tongue (that vnruly member) which if we refraine not, our religion is in vaine; and to rule it well, is a note of true profession.

Iacob, 3. 1 Iacob.

Obs. 84. Silence a speciall lesson to be learned of Courtiers.

Wherin as we see the fitnesse of this Christian counsell; VVhat fitter lesson to a woman then silence? So we may learne hereby the necessity of this vertue, especially when wee come abroad in the catching and obseruing Court.

1 VVhat more safe for a man here then silence? where euery
2 word shal be scanned, and happily peruerted: what greater
3 wisdome here then silence, where y wisest speaches go not without their censure? *what greater* gaine heere then

silence

ſilence? Whereby a man may learne, and make vſe of all others ſpeach, that ſo when he is called, he may ſpeak with authority.

Vſe. And therefore lette not impudent beggers heere continue ſtill crauing, vpon preſumptions that the Prince will neuer be weary of giuing: *Lette not diſcourſers* runne them-ſelues out of breath at tables and chambers, to make 2
others ſport and them-ſelues a marke for euery mans tongue: *let not cõplementers* account it their glory to pratle 3
of euery thing, when they make no conſcience to practiſe the beſt things; *let not flatterers* t uſt to this ſame glibbe & 4
ſlippery mẽber: to whom being ſo deeply indebpted, they muſt look to make paiment, and happy are they if ſhame & repentance wil cleare the ſcore: what ſhould I ſay? *Let not* 5
Carry-tales and *Detractors* hope to carry it away cleanly, ſeeing their own tongues ſhal one day cry quittance with them: But let al remember *Mordecaies* leſſon to *Heſter*, ỹ in the Court they rule their tongue, and ſo ſhall they bee ſure to keepe their friend. But what end doth *Mordecai* aime at in this his leſſon of ſilence? Surely his heart was touched with the care of the Church, for he ſaw a greater ſtorme like to come in vpon it: He feared leaſt *Heſter* by this diſ-vnion might indanger the ſame: he hoped that her wiſe ſilence for a time, might breed good blood for it deliuerance: and therfore doth he aduiſe her, eſpecially, ſilence in this caſe, leaſt her diſcouery might bee a meanes of indangering the Church of God: As beeing that which the enemy lay in wait for; and to which her weaknes & youth might be eaſily abuſed. Wherein wee may obſerue what principally ought to affect vs, ỹ danger wherof we ought eſpecially to preuent: *Namely* the Church of God and its ſucceſſe.

1. *Thus* doth our god principally regard, & ſo ſhould we haue the like reſpect of it. 2. *On* the wel-fare hereof depẽds al our priuate happines: and therfore if we be wiſe, we wil herein be wiſe to our ſelues, 3. *yea our* care hereof wil be meanes to cõfort vs in our troubles, & make way for our

Obſ. 85. The ſafety of Gods church ought to be our ſpecial care.

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4 deliuerance; *yea* which is especially to be regarded of vs, our zeale to Gods Church witnesseth our true interest therein; that if we mourne with it, we shall also reioyce
Psal. 122. 1 Cor. therewith; and so raigne for euer as liuely members of the same in glory. So was *Nehemiah*, *Dauid*, *Iosiah* and the rest.

1. *Vse.* What shall we then say of those that neuer take thought for Gods inheritance? Lette it sinke or swimme its all one to them: *What* case are they in that drinke
2 their wine in bowles, while *Ioseph* is in affliction?
3. *How* fearefull is their condition that helpe forward the affliction; reioycing greatly at the Churches fall? And with all their strength and pollicie cry it downe to the grounde; But of this wee shall haue fitter occasion to speake heereafter, when wee consider of *Hamans* and *Mordecaies* contrary affection heerein.

Thus you see the care of *Mordecai* for the Church of God: and to this end you haue heard of his charge to his Nephew. Now let vs see how *Hester* obeyes this iniunction: It is said that

Shee did not shew her people nor her kinred .i. shee was obedient to the Councell of her Father *Mordecai*, and doth not discouer her country nor her Fathers house.

Obs. 86. Obedience to lawful authority, a true marke of the Child of god. 4. Sam. 15. A notable marke of the true childe of God: Namely in lawful things, to bee obedient to superiors commaunds; 1. *So* hath God commanded; 2. *so* shal we prolong our daies. 3. *so* is corruption humbled *and* patience tryed. 4. *so* is faith excercised, and *order* maintained. 5. *so is God* honoured better then with sacrifice. 6. and man also by obeying more honored then if he could commaund
7 obedience. In a word, *where* obedience is, there is safe-
8 ty, and all prosperity: but confusiō followeth disorder and
9 disobedience. *What* may we then iudge of those ỳ iustifie treason and rebellion in inferiors? *that* allow the subiect to rebel against the Prince, yea to take his life from him? *that* warrant the childe to forsake their parents, and

iustifie.

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iuſtifie diſobedience in al ſorts: ſhall we think ỳ this proceeds from an *heroical ſpirit*? Shal we eſteem it as greater obedience and honour vnto God? who becauſe hee is obeyed aboue man, therfore wee muſt not obey man in him, & vnder him? So the *Papiſts aduance their traitors & iuſtifie their treaſos*: Surely *how* neceſſarily muſt theſe erre, not knowing the Scriptures? *how* fearefully do theſe reiect God in not obeying his ordinance? ſhall wee looke that God will honour them that doe thus diſhonour him? Bleſſed bee our GOD who hath maintained his own cauſe, and hath iuſtified his ordinance in the confuſion of his enemies. *So* lette all thine enemies periſh oh Lord, ſo bee thou exalted in the protection of thine Annoynted.

But wherin doth this obedience of *Heſter* ſhew it ſelfe? Surely in concealing a ſecret not fitte to be known; No doubt her father had giuen her many other good leſſons, & happily among ſo many, ſhe might haue forgotte this; or happily ſhe might haue diſpenſed with it, as a matter of no great conſequence; and ſeeing it was a thing would not be long hid, why might ſhe not preuent the diſcouery thereof by others, and ſo make her own peace by the benefit of ſuch fauors ỳ were caſt vpon hir by ỳ Eunuch and ſuch like? neglecting the eſtate of the reſt of her country. Surely (I take it) herein we may obſerue the *conſcionableneſſe of her obedience*; that though ſhee might haue thus ſtrayned in the poynt, yet the reuerent authority of the commander keepes her from theſe demurres, and ſo not ſo much ſhee conſiders the waight of the thing commaunded; as that ſhe is ſimply led by the authority of her ſuperiors.

Obſ. 87. Sincere obedience rather reſpects the power of the Commander then the worth of the thing commanded.

A notable euidence, of the ſincerity of our obedience, that it depend not ſo much vppon the thing commanded, as vppon the iuſt authority of the commander him-ſelfe: *becauſe* as our ſeruice is then moſt acceptable to GOD when it hath leaſt reſpect to our ſelues, and moſt to his glory, ſo it is moſt free from mercenary baſeneſſe

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when we ſtand not ſo much vpon the thing commanded which doth concerne our owne good; as vpon the power of the commander for whoſe ſake we do it.

Thus did the Lord trye the obedience of our firſt parents, the thinges he commandes might ſeeme to bee of no great waight, but that the Authoritie and commander gaue power thereto: which they not wayghing duely (as in conſcience they ſhould) but principally reſpecting what a ſmal matter was only impoſed; not to cutte of an *Apple*: were therefore eaſily drawne to very fearefull diſobedyence; and ſo haue ſette their childrens teeth on edge, by eating that forbidden fruit.

Vſe. 1. Whereby wee may learne, how to certifie our obedience. *Namely* to haue an eſpeciall reſpect to ỹ iuſt power of the ſuperior, and ſo in reuerence of that power, to yeeld obedience to his righteous commaund: *not making* difference thereof, in regard of the things cõmanded, but performing indifferent obedience to al alike; as they proceed from a like power of thoſe whome God hath ſet ouer vs: *making* conſcience as well of the leaſt as ỹ greateſt commaunds; becauſe the Commaunder is the ſame, and his power as great in the leaſt as in the greateſt: *And* our faith and humilitie beeing more tryed in obeying the leaſt, will be a good meanes to further vs to preferment, that ſo not obeying man for hope of reward; we may not yet be diſappointed of our hope in the reward aboue. Thus doth the Lord approue the ſincerity of *Heſters* obedience. Vnto which if wee ſhall adde that which further is remembred in the 20. *verſe*, that *Heſter* did euen as conſcionably after the wordes of *Mordecai*, beeing now from vnder his gouernment, *as when ſhe was nouriſhed by him*: We haue herein a further teſtimony of the vprightneſſe thereof. The holy Ghoſt (as I take it) ſignifying herein vnto vs the maine ground of her obedience: Namely, that though ſhee was now exempted from the ſight and gouernment of her earthly father *Mordecai*, yet ſhee remayned vnder the obeyſance of her heauenly Father

Obſ. 88. True obedience performed as well in abſence as in preſence.

Father: For whose sake shee performes as conscionably obedience to *Mordecai* being absent, as if he had him vnder neuer so much subiection. *So doth* she approue her obedience to bee in the sight of God, and *so is* cleared from eye-seruice, and such like; *so doth* she witnesse it also to be for the Lords sake, and so purgeth it vtterly of all carnall respects: And in this her bodily absence performing as true seruice vnto *Mordecai* as if he were present; *shee retaines* her right in the holy family, and so is partaker of the prayers, and blessings thereof. Yea *shee* keeps hereby within the couenant of God, and so prepares a way for further blessings. Col, 3. 22.

Behold here a patterne of sincere obedience: And doth not the Lord requite it accordingly? Yea surely, as *Hester* obeyes *Mordecai* when he is out of her sight; so doth *Mordecai* care for *Hester* though now she be from vnder his gouernment. *For so it followeth.*

And Mordecai *walked euery day before the Court of the womens house, to know if* Hester *did well, and what should be done with her.* Thus carefull is he of his Nephew euen when shee is of yeares to gouerne her selfe. Vers, 11.

So ought parents not to reiect the care of their children, euen when they seeme to haue least need of them: Because 1. as *hereby* they shew the soundnesse of their affection: *so this* riper estate of their children, doth now most require this care, as exposing their children to more fearefull extremities, as now knowing their strength, and so now strong to do euill. *And wherein* shall earthly parents better resemble their heauenly Father, then by continuall loue and care of their posteritie? *Nay* how shall they otherwise differ from bruit beasts, if they onely care for their children to hatch them vp, & so send them forth into the world; and there's an end. Had not *Iob* a dayly care of his children, though in regard of the world, they had no need of him? Because the more they had of the world, the longer they had liued therein, the more they were subiect to greater danger? what care had *Naomi* of her *Obs.* 89. Parents how far to extend their care for their children 2 3 4 Ruth, 1. Iob, 1.

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her daughter in law *Ruth*? how did *Moyſes* take care for Gods people when they enioyed great proſperity?

Vſe 1. Wel let *Mordecai* condemne prophane parents that thinke much to giue their Children euen bringing vp, if they haue done this, they thinke they are fully diſcharged; eſpecially if they can prouide them ſome trade, or portion to get a liuing withall: Alas if they conſidered well, the greateſt care is behind; when do children more greiue and ſhame their parents, then at this eſtate? when they come to their owne liberty, and haue fuell to their luſts? and how many iuſt curſes doe lie vpon parents, not for giuing too little, when they were Children, as for giuing to much libertie, when they haue growne vp to be men.

Obiect. If you ſay they are now paſt correction, they are better able then I, wherein then ſhould I ſhew my care?

Anſ. 1. Surely *giue good* example vnto them, that ſo they may
2 be ordered. *Let* them be often in thine eye, that ſo thy
3 preſence may awe them; *Spare* not to reproue them plaine-
4 ly, *and* forget not inſtruction as occaſion ſhalbe offered.
5 *Keepe* them to the dueties of children, without reſpect of their age, or ritches: ſo ſhalt thou keepe thy iuſt autho-
6 ritie ouer them. *Keepe* the ſtaffe in thine hand, and let
7 their maintenance come from thee. *Let* the Magiſtrate
8 helpe thee if correction here be needefull: *But* eſpecially craue helpe of GOD, that his bleſſing may bee vpon them.

Obſer. 9. Care how it may ſtand with the prouidence of God.

But what need *Mordecai* take this care of *Heſter*? was he not perſwaded that GOD would care for her? *Yea* ſurely, and therefore alſo is he carefull for her, becauſe he knowes the prouidence of God to ſubordinate
1 fit meanes. *And* who more fitte to care for her then he
Act. 27. that had bound himſelfe thereto? So then an honeſt
2 care ſtands well with Gods prouidence and faith therein:
3 as whereby we both ſhew our ſincere obedience in
4 vſing ſuch weake meanes as are ſubordinate thereto, and

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ſo auoide ſecurity and preſumption, two maine enemies of our moſt holy faith.

Vſe 1. Which as it condemneth their preſumption, that caſt all vpon God, neglecting the meanes: *So* on the other ſide it reproueth their carnall confidence who reſt all on themſelues and ſhut out God. *The* meane which (I take it) is to bee obſerued herein, is an obedience to Gods commandement, to watch circumſpectly in our callings, 1. *caſting* about the beſt meanes, and 2. *caring* to compaſſe our deſires, that we *neither tie* 3. the iſſue abſolutely to our labour, but referre it wholy to the bleſſing of GOD, nor 4. *ſacrifice* to our care as if by it we had obtained, nor by it make 5. *ſacrifices* of our ſelues to Sátan in our cruell macerating of our ſelues to *impotency* and *diſtruſt*. But as we muſt 1. care, to be humbled thereby; ſo we muſt alſo caſt our 2. *care* on God, for he careth for vs, 3. *contenting* our ſelues that we haue done our beſt, howſoeuer happily it may haue bad ſucceſſe, *and beeing* 4. *comforted* further alſo in the greateſt plunges, becauſe our GOD ſhall turne all to our good. Thus doth *Mordecai* giue God the glory of his faith, while yet he ſhewes his loue to his kinſwoman. And doth not the Lord giue a gracious iſſue thereto? Conſider I pray you what followeth next.

2. 3. 1 Pet. 4.

12. *And when the courſe of euery maide came to go in to King* Ahaſhueroſh *after that ſhe had beene &c.*

In theſe three next verſes, *the holy Ghoſt* ſets downe the abhominable cuſtome of theſe maidens; in their *preparing* to the Kings bedde; and alſo, their *admittance* to the ſame.

Their *preparation* is ſet downe by two circumſtances. Firſt by the continuance of Time which was allotted for this preparation: It was no leſſe then *twelue moneths*. 2. It is alſo deſcribed by the *meanes* thereof, and thoſe are of *two ſorts*. The firſt is ordinary, and this alſo is two-fold, they muſt be *annointed* and *purified* ſixe moneths, with oyle of mirrhe. 2. and the other ſixe monethes with *ſweet odours*, and in the purifying of the women.

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The extraordinary meanes that is allowed for their purification, is here described indifferently: Namely whatsoeuer any of the Virgins did otherwise require, to set out their beauty, and steale away the Kings heart, that must also be giuen vnto them.

The maidens being thus prepared, are in the second place, admitted to the Kings bed, and herein also we may obserue two circumstances.

1. The *time* of their admission, a very short time: *In the euening shee went and on the morrow shee returned &c.*

2. The *condition* of her admission is here also commended, vnto vs. Namely that when euer she returned, *shee came vnto the King no more except shee pleased the King and were called by name.* This is breefely the summe of these words.

Obser. 90. A marke of the wicked to riot out time.

Wherein that no lesse then a yeare must be spent in fitting these miserable Virgins to the lust of the King, doth not this set out vnto vs, his most prodigious luxury, and profusion? doth it not discouer such effeminateness, as cannot well be deciphred? May we not herein obserue a note of desperate folly thus to riot out time in vanity? May we not set it downe as a marke of him, that knowes not GOD, that he makes no conscience of the redeeming of the time, but rather imploies his wits and wealth in the spending and wasting thereof? Surely if time be in *this regard* most pretious, because the Lord therein offers vs a pearle of chiefest price, no meaner a Iewell, then the saluation of our soules? Must not saluation be farre from them, that neglect so gratious opportunitie? can they be accepted of God, that refuse this acceptable time? And is it not more then madnesse thus to riot out time which is not ours to dispose, but in the hands of God? can we be excused when the bride-grome shall come on the suddaine?

Times portion.
1 2Cor.6. 2.
Pro 1.24.25
2 Act.1.7.

Vse. Oh that we were wise to consider these things! *that our Time-seruers* would lay it to their hearts: what a heauy wittnes time wilbe against them, when neglecting the

the Iewell thereof the ſaluation of our ſoules, they are only ſlaues to the corruptions of time? *Did* our *gameſters* wiſely conſider of this, that togither with their *witte*, and *money*, and *honeſtie*, they alſo play away their *time*, that moſt pretious time which can neuer be wonne againe: ſurely they would labour with God, that he would teach them to *number their daies*, that *ſo they might apply their hearts vnto wiſdome*. *And* ſhall not time be a witneſſe againſt our *wordlings*, who haue no leyſure to come to the marriage of the Kings ſonne? but all time is to little for their farmes and for their oxen? *What ſhall I ſay* to our *prophane Eſawes*; that ſay it is not yet time to build the houſe of God? good time enough behinds for the ſaluation of our ſoules: Let vs be wiſe, and take the time while wee may: let vs looke to the maine chance; Let our owne houſes go forward: *What is this birth-right to vs?* ſhall we die for hunger? *hearken how our voluptuous perſons*, haue diſpoſed of time? *At all times let thy garments bee white, and let no oyle be lacking vpon thy head. Let vs eate and drinke, for to morrow we ſhal die: ſoule take thy eaſe thou haſt goods laid vp for many yeares.* Shall not the Lord of that ſeruant come in an houre when he knowes not? ſhall not he ſay, and make it good, *thou foole this night ſhall thy ſoule be taken away from thee*? But why ſpeake we to the bellie that hath no eares? Surely the voice of Time yet was in our ſtreets and the man of wiſdome, ſhall heare the name of God, *Oh yee fooliſh how long will yee loue* fooliſhneſſe? *Why doe yee lay out ſilner, and not for bread*? Why do you ſpend your time, and ſtrength, without being ſatisfied? Say not with thy ſelfe, yet a little ſleepe, yet a litle ſlumber? put not off (as *Felix* did) til a more conuenient time? Oh boaſt not of to morrow, for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth! rather admire the mercy of thy God, that thou art not already conſumed: and ſeeing the Lord hath ſpared thee, to recouer what thou haſt loſt, Oh thinke it ſufficient that thou haſt ſpent the time paſt, after the luſt of the Gentiles: the more time thou haſt loſt, the more

2

Pſa. 90. 12.

3

4

Eccle. 9. 8.
1 Cor. 15. 25

Luk. 12. 20.

Math. 6.
1 Pro.
Eſay 55. 2.
Time how to be redeemed.
Pro. 6

Eccle. 5. 12

Lam. 3. 13.

more doe thou labour for the time to come and redeeme thy time with the price of thy former pleasures *Account* daily with thy selfe how thou dost bestow it, *and esteeme* euery minuite pretious that is offered thee, *and* be sure thou seest therein an image of eternity. And considering that the patience of the Lord doth lead thee to repentance, make no long tarying to turne to the Lord thy God, least abusing his patience, thou harden thine heart, and though thou cry after, yea bitterly as *Esau* did, yet the Lord will not heare thee, because thou wouldst not heare him. Oh that we were wise to consider these things! But they that are filthy will be filthier still.

Eccle.5.
Rom 2.4.
Gen.27.
Pro.1.24.28.

*Obs.*91. Another marke of the wicked to riot out Gods good creatures

Behold his drunkennesse added to thirst: you haue heard how these Princes Minions spend their time, a whole yeare at least must be spent to fit them to vncleanesse, that so they may more desperately follow the same all their life long. And shal they only giue an account of ỹ mispending of their time? No surely: what is there that escapes taynture by this abuse of time? The *soule* that is hardned and made impudent in sinne, the body is made a factor and baud for sinne, the *good creatures of God* are made fuell to sinne, heer's no sparing of cost to maintaine sinne: All the creatures of God are to little in this case, but that *Art* also must be made a broker euen to corrupt nature (*six moneths with oyle of myrhe, and six moneths with sweet odors*) and such other purifyings as do belong to women. No end of excesse *vpon pretence* of our right in the creature. *No end of abuse* to condemne our vsurped power ouer them: so corrupt is our nature to abuse our liberty, so *iust* is the Lord to turne our liberty to our further condemnation; that the creature abused, being subiect to vanity, might cry vnto the Lord to be eased of the burthen, and so hasten vengeance vpon the wicked, while they heape abuse vpon the creature.

1
2
3
4
Rom.8.19.
Iod.1.

Vse. 1. *A notable* euidence of the sorrefull condition of the wicked, who in the iudgement of the world seeme therefore to be most happy, because they haue most commaunds

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ouer outward blessings. Whose great liberty on the creatures, prouoking to greater abuse, doth *either* thereby moue the Lord to cast out such *Nebuchadnezzars* as beasts in this life, and to strippe them of all, or else *there continuance* in these blessings, encreasing sinne vpon them, doth thereby further vengeance against the day of reckoning. A thing which because the wicked cannot avoyd as vsurping ouer Gods blessings, and therefore necessarily making them strangers vnto them. *That we* may therefore avoyd running into the same excesse; let vs labour to be in *Christ*, that so we may haue a right in these things, and *let vs* renew our right by prayer and holy imployment of them in our seuerall callings, that so we may attaine to a right vse of them, *frugally* husbanding them as the good blessings of God, and vsing them *soberly* as hand-maides to higher graces, that so we may lay vp a good foundation by them, and also giue *a cheerefull account* for them at the day of Christ Iesus.

Dan. 4.

How to preuent abuse of the creatures. 2. Cor. 5. 17. 1. Tim. 4. 4. 1. Tim. 6. 19.

But is there no colour for this great excesse? might not this be imputed as a *complement of state*, that these maidens should haue such exquisite preparations, because it was for the most excellent personage? might not *seemelinesse*, and *necessity* be here pretended, that they might be offered fitly and vnspotted to the bed of a King? might not *liberty* be pleaded, and therefore who shall restraine? might not *ability* be avouched to iustifie this cost? Surely the greatest sinnes will haue their cloakes, *pride* must go for cleanlinesse, and *excesse* must keepe state, the *cleansing of the body* must be with the defiling of the soule, and *lust will* haue a law to enrage and prouoke the same. *Thus are* the wicked deceiued, while they deceiue others, thus are they *hardned* in their sinne, while it hath a cloake to keepe it from shame: *Thus* pretending what they may doe, what euill will they not prosecute with greedinesse, seeing power is in their hands, and so hauing made vp the measure of their sinne bee suddenly caught

Obs. 92. The wicked haue pretences for their greatest abuses.

caught with destruction, while they say peace and security. 1. *Thess.* 5. 3.

Vse 1. Oh that we would trie our selues whether we stand in grace or no! To sinne is naturall, but to cloake sinne is diuelish. *And* therefore though outward ability may afford meanes of such excesse; yet the *ability of the* minde should temper such meanes, for the good of both; and though it be lawfull for me to take my fill of Gods creatures, yet *expediency* will moderate as may best fit me to glorifie my Creator: And what should *necessity* do with such *superfluity*? what seemelinesse can their be where Nature is thus adulterated? As for complement of state to be furnished hereby, what greater abasement of state then to be a slaue where it should rule? and what more enthrals greatnesse then abuse of it power, then excesse in it libertie? Let vs therefore cast away these cloakes of shame; and in the feare of GOD, learne we an holie and sober vse of the blessings of God, let not *examples* deceiue vs, nor *libertie* enthrall vs: *let not necessity* make vs *wantons*, nor *fulnesse* make vs *miserable*. But vie we the blessings of GOD to the *glorie* of the giuer: *Let our callings* be the *measure*, and our *saluation* the *end*, let *necessity* bee the *motiue*, and true *liberty* the *moderator*: *Let* experience be the *Iudge*, and *edification* the *marke* we aime at: so shall we vse aright the good blessings of God: and being faithfull in a little, we shalbe made stewards of great blessings.

2 Rules for moderation in the creatures.

1 Cor. 10, 31
1
2
3
4
5
6
1 Cor. 10.
8 Rom.
Math. 25

Well thus we haue remoued these shameless vyzards, and pretences for this. Now let vs examine the true cause of this excesse. It followeth in the. 13. verse. *Whatsoeuer she called for, it was giuen vnto her to go with her out of the womens house into the Kings house*. Lo here the maine cause of all this superfluity. It was to go into the house of the King, to satisfie his lust: And therefore spare no cost, let there be giuen what-soeuer is called for: So eagerly are the wicked bent to the satisfying of their lusts, so do they spare no cost, for the fulfilling thereof. Nor their *eare-rings* and *bracelets* but shall go willingly to make the calfe,

Obser. 93. The wicked most eagerly bent vpon their lusts, and spare no cost for the satisfying thereof.
Exod. 32

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yea the *fruit of their bodie*, for the sinne of their soule. *Such* Mich. 6.
paines do they take to increase their paine: so foolish are 1
they to bestow such cost vpon so hard a reckoning. *And* 2
yet how shall they bewray their loue to sinne, vnlesse it
cost them thus deare? *How* shall they iustifie this vani- 3
ty in the eye of the world, but by being at so great cost
for it? if it were not worth it, surely such wise men would
not lay out so much vpon it. It were not worth the ha-
uing, vnlesse it cost them thus deere. *How* should they
make others in loue with sinne but by prizing it 4
so highly? *How should* sinne bee nourished, but by 5
such aboundance of fuell? *There* credit now binding 6
them, hauing laid out so much vpon it, to make the 7
best of their bargaine; *And* this cost, giuing for a
time some miserable comfort in the sinne, that so
they might at length make vppe the measure thereof.

Vses 1. Which as it condemneth that opinion of the
world, that rich men are onely righteous, and onely the
poore wicked; whereas rather these being not able to
be at the cost of sinne, are so kept from it, the other ha-
uing where-withall, are the likelier chapmen: *So* it much 2
more condemneth these badde market-men, who cast a-
way their money on such trash as sinne is: yea hereby
also do cast away themselues.

Surely if GOD be the bestower of those outward 3
blessings, and to this end they were giuen, that he might
haue the glorie: are not great ones here tied to Gods
seruice with a greater bond? haue they not better meanes
and leisure then others to intend the same? *And* yet 4
this shall not excuse the *poore*, but they are badde hus-
bands also: Though they haue not such meanes, yet they
can bestow to much cost on sinne: they will bestow
their Time, and whatsoeuer they haue: their wills
are as good, though they cannot put it in practize;
and what can the diuell haue more then all that they
haue.

Well let such consider of this, that thinke all cost to 5

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1 Malachi. little for the seruice of GOD, that rob be the LORD *in tythes*, and offerings: that giue him but the lippes, and out-side in his seruice, that rent him in the power and plenty thereof, as if we could be to *righteous* or he too much serued, shall not the grosse sinner rise vp in iudgement against them?

But what? must these wantons haue whatsoeuer they call for? must they do what they list as (if their were no King in *Israel*) and yet doth the King commande it? doth authority allow such licence to sinne?

Indg 17

Obser. 94. Wicked Magistrates giue the bridle to sinne, and countenance wickednesse in others.

Behold here a note of wicked Magistrates, instead of bridling sinne, they giue the reine to it. *Ele* how should their example bee warranted if they did not warrant others? *How should* they hope for the loue of their people, if they gaue them not this liberty, if they made them not like vnto them? *How* should they (as they thinke) keepe their subiects from plotting against them, but by drowning them, thus in all kind of filthinesse? *How should* they hope to rule them at their pleasure, if they did not thus infatuate and abiect them to all kind of pleasures?

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Thus doth Atheisticall policy giue libertty to sinne. But not I pray you to the confusion thereof? Let vs a little examine these grounds? must sinne be made common that I may goe vncontrouled? what extraordinary priuiledge and delight can I haue herein, seeing I abase my pleasures as common to euery one? What security can I haue in the continuance of them when I haue so many sharers and spoilers thereof? Ought I not therefore rather restraine sinne in others, that so I may in them reforme my selfe? that my ill example may be better indured, when I am beloued not for my owne worth, but for conscience sake? surely euen a bad husband, will yet see his seruants shall worke, that so he may haue to maintaine his vnthriftinesse with all: And shall I hope to bee beloued of my people by giuing that libertie which makes them hatefull to themselues, and vnfit for any duty whereby they might shew their loue?

Surely

Surely though by this meanes I make them like vnto me, yet neither is likeneſſe in ſinne the ground of loue eſpecially betweene the Prince and ſubiect, neither will fellowſhippe in euill euer breede true loue, but rather iealouſie and hatred are the hand-maides thereof. Remember *Amnons* loue to *Thamar*, and the iſſue thereof. 1 Sam. 14

And ſhall euil be preuented by giuing the reyne thereto? doth not liberty to ſinne giue ſtrength thereto, euen iuſtly to be auenged, of ſuch fooliſh indulgence? It may be this licence may for a time abiect the ſubiect to a ſlauiſh obedience, and hauing made him a beaſt you may happily foode him as your drudge and pack-horſe, but if you tread on a worme to hard, he will turne againe: and while you hope the better to rule him by drawing him in pleaſure, take heed you make him not more ſauage and hard to be tamed.

Obſer. 95. Princes how to ſecure their eſtates.

And therefore if you plot for true loue and ſecurity of your ſtates, *kiſſe yon* the Sonne of righteouſneſſe, that your people may embrace you: *Giue lawes* that may breed feare, and *chaſe* away the wicked, by the power thereof, ſo ſhall your thrones be eſtabliſhed in iuſtice. *So ſhall* the righteous dwell in peace, and ſhall bleſſe your gouernment. This ſhalbe the meanes to preuent al conſpiracies, when the Keeper of *Iſrael* watcheth ouer your Kingdomes, and knitteth the hearts of your people towards you, and by this you ſhall learne to be mercifull to your beaſts, much more to your ſubiects, that they may cheerefully obey you. Thus ought Godly Princes gouerne their people: But as for our *Perſian* Monarch his luſt is his law, and his belly his God, and therefore no maruaile if he do after his kind, and in his greateſt wiſdome haſten his owne diſtruction.

For to come now to the iſſue of all this preparation: of all this libertie and abuſe of GODS creatures: Is it not to prouoke the luſt of this Epicure, and ſo to waſt his bodie, and deſtroy his ſoule? yea ſurely, the

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holie Ghoſt witneſſeth no leſſe, in that which followeth.

Verſ. 14 *In the euening ſhee went and on the morrowe ſhee returned, into the ſecond houſe of the women vnder the hand of* Shaaſhgaz *the Kings* Eunuch, *which kept the Concubines: ſhee came in to the King no more; except ſhee pleaſed the King; and that ſhe were called by name.*

In which words the admiſſion of theſe maidens to the Kings bedde is declared vnto vs: and, *i.* the Time of their admiſſion is ſpecified, *in the euening ſhee went, and on the morrowe ſhee returned* that is to ſay, She is, to goe in the euening, as fitteſt for a worke of darkeneſſe, the eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, he is aſhamed of the light, he feares it will bewray him. And her pleaſure continues but for a night: ſo momentary are the pleaſures which the wicked do enioy. So iuſt is the LORD to confound their vaine confidence, that while they promiſe to themſelues perpetuitie therein; they both preſume of more then the nature of their pleaſures can performe, and are preuented by Gods iuſtice confounding the ſame, euen in their greateſt likelihood and ability thereof. *Luk.* 12.20.

Iob 24.15

Obſer. 96. The pleaſures of the wicked very ſhort and ſlippery.

Vſe 1. And ſhall we ſet our hearts on that which is ſuch a ſtranger vnto vs? So daungerous in the vſe? So fearefull in the change? *Shall* we to catch theſe ſhadowes, forſake the ſubſtance? ſhall the pleaſures of the right hand which laſt for euermore, ſhall theſe (I ſay) be diſclaimed for theſe pleaſures of ſinne which endure but for a ſeaſon? *Shall* we thinke our ſelues vnhappie becauſe we drinke not of theſe broken miſeries? *Shall* we eſteeme thoſe bleſſed that abide in ſuch ſlipperie places? *Shall* we not rather chooſe with *Moyſes* hauing an eye to the recompence of the rewarde? *Ought* wee not the rather to ſecure theſe ſlipperie Eſtates by ſanctifying them daylie in an holie vſe thereof, and readineſſe to forgoe them, when the LORD ſhall call?

2

3 Ierc. 2

4 Pſal. 73

5 Hebr. 11

6

But

But is there not a miſtery in this, that the *Virgin muſt come in the euening, and returne in the morning*. She muſt ſtay but a night, *luſt* muſt haue *change*, that it may be ſatisfied, and *change* hath *a ſore* with it, to conſume the body, and ſo to be auenged for the abuſe of this liberty. *Obſer.97.* Variety in ſin the greateſt ſnare thereto.

So wiſe are the wicked for the maintenance of ſinne. *So iuſt* is the LORD, in *confounding* this their wiſdome, as making it the meanes to haſten their deſtruction. *So* is the Epicure met withall in the variety of his danties, ſo is ambition tangled in the ſtirrops of her climing; ſo variety of meanes to ſinne, is the ſnare thereto. 1 2

Vſe 1. And may not they then be condemned of extreame follie, which thinke it pleaſanteſt ſwimming; where there is many baites? they may bee here, or there: what liberty is this?

2. Is not their madneſſe intollerable, that when one is to much to choake them, wil be nibbling at them all: nay, will ſwallow them greedily, as if they had found great ſpoiles. Surely ſuch is the caſe of the *Whore-maiſter*, and *drunkard*: ſuch is the *ambitious* perſon, the *couetous*, and oppreſſor: ſuch are all they that delight in ſinne, theſe muſt haue variety, that their confuſion may be the greater. *Oh* let vs not therefore binde ſinnes together! *Let* vs feare ſuch baites as may further change in ſinne. *Let* complementers looke to this, and *factors* for other mens ſinnes. *Let* vs ſingle out our ſinnes that we may the better ouer-maiſter them. *Let* vs not ſeeke after greatneſſe, which may yeeld vs this libertie: *But* rather pray for ſuperiors that haue ſuch baites to ſinne, *And* not liue by examples, which may ſo dangerouſly corrupt vs. 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Well thus we haue heard what ſhort *pleaſure* this poore maiden hath had. Now let vs heare a little of her paine. It followeth. *Shee returned into the ſecond houſe of the women*: that hauing made ſale of her honeſty, and ſo changed her happie eſtate of Virginity to become a *Obſ.98.* The wicked fall deeper and deeper into ſinne.

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Concubine, she changeth also her *habitation*: And whereas before she was in the house of the Virgins; now she is remoued to the house of the women; such as had left their honesties behind them, *that here* among fellowes in euill griefe might be prouoked, and yet notwithstanding she might be hardened in her sinne; as being here like to finde companions therein, & so miserable comforters to excuse and iustifie the same. *So* cunning is Satan to maintaine his new gotten hold: *So* vnthankefull is sinne to recompence our seruice with shame and sorrow, *So* desperate is the condition of the wicked, *they sinke deeper and deeper*: *So* iust is the Lord in their appointed condemnation, that neither *shortnesse* of pleasure, nor *change* thereof into sorrow; nor *disgrace* of men, nor *sting of conscience*: nothing shall stay the wicked, indeede nothing can stay them, till they haue made vp their measure, that God may powre on his.

Reasons 1.

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1. Well let this aduize vs not to beleeue the faire promises of the world; the best recompence she can yeeld vs when she hath made vs serue her lust, is to thrust vs into the house of the women, to reape desperate sorrow for the same, or else to harden vs further therein, seeing now we are knowne to be but broken ware, here is the best remedie the world affords for sinne, euen to send vs to our like companions in euill: that so we may haue company to go to hell withall.

2

Who so is wise let him vnderstand these things, *let* him not hope to recouer out of sinne by giuing further liberty thereto through fellowshippe &c. *Let him* take heed of the house of the women, of pleasure, sencerity, &c. such meanes as do harden. *Nay let him not* enter into his brothers house in the day of his humiliation: miserable comforters are these all.

3

But let him go to his God, by true repentance, and *let him single* out the Lord, that so he may be more vile in his presence: so shall he finde rest in the euill day.

Abac. 3.

Psal. 32. 5.

I said I will confesse my sinnes vnto the LORD and thou for-

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forgaueſt me the iniquity of them.

But let vs a little further conſider of that which followeth.

> *Shee came into the King no more, except ſhee pleaſed the King and,* (this was a ſigne that ſhee pleaſed the King) *if that ſhee were called by name.*

Behold here a further euidence of the badde wages of ſinne: This defiled woman muſt now burne in luſt, and ſhall not be ſatisfied, to the King ſhee muſt come no more, but at a long leyſure and for other meanes, the iealouſie and honour of the Prince, and the watchfulneſſe and ſafety of the keeper will looke to it ſoundly. What then is her puniſhment? ſurely not onely to be denied of that, which ſhe moſt deſireth, but by this denial to be tormented with the rage of her vnſatisfied luſt, to the great vexation both of bodie, and ſoule.

Obſer. 99. The vnſatiablenes of the wicked in ſin hath his puniſhment attending on it in this life that is ſhall not be ſatisfied.

So is the *couetous* man tormented in the reſtraint of his vnſatiable deſire; *ſo is* the proude man reproched becauſe the world will not honour him; *ſo is* the *Epicure* puniſhed in this life, by being giuen vp to ſuch a deſire of eating, that nothing can ſatisfie; *ſo do* the birds of prey euen die for famine. *So* patient is the Lord hereby *to prouoke* the wicked to repentance, *ſo iuſtly* doth hee *haſten* hereby their condemnation, becauſe ſinne reſtrained is the more enraged: *ſo wiſely* doth hee diſcouer hereby the vnſatiableneſſe of the minde to ſinne: *ſo righteouſlie* doth he ſeeke vppe into them, there eternall vengeance by this; that as their deſire to ſinne is vnſatiable, and in this life is reſtrained; ſo for this their infinite deſire, they ſhall be eternally burne in hell: where yet they ſhalbe vtterly depriued, of all ſatisfaction of their luſts.

Haman. 5 Heſter. *Ariſtot. et Plin. de Aquilis.*

1. Oh conſider this you that forget GOD; and

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Eph. 4 19. dead your consciences, that you may commit sinne with *greedinesse*: you that enlarge your desires as hell, that you may take your fill of sinne: behold the more greedie you are, the lesse you shall be satisfied; euen no lesse then hell that neuer can bee satisfied. Doe you not see herein how sinne will owe you nothing? your desires shall bee laide open, how vnsatiable they are: and God shall giue you your desire, you shall not bee satisfied. And therefore condemne not Gods iustice, but the vnsatiableness of your desire. Is not this a fearefull satiating of the wicked *with his owne wayes*? when hee shall not bee satisfied, wherein hee is vnsatiable, when his satiating in sinne doth make him more vnsatiable: how iust is it that offenders should burne in lust, and so bee deemed the comfort of mariage. *Oh leaue* therefore to purge the fountaine of this mischiefe, labour to preuent *vnsatiableness* in sinne, 1. *purge* it from the *heart*, or else it must bee vnsatiable; 2. *refraine* it in the *occasions*, which may breed a desire of vnsatiableness, looke to the *liberty of sinne*, that in giuing thee thy desire, shall nothing lesse then satisfie thee: *and consider wisely* the *rest* of sinne, euen *restlesse torment*, and yet neuer satisfied.

Non cum saturitate, sed cũ auiditate indicat spiritus appetitu insatibile, nõ satiandum.

2

3

Prou. 14.4

4

Vnsatiablenesse in sinne how to bee preuented.

5 And seeing our desires in euill haue such ill successe, oh let vs labour to place them on the true obiect; let Heauen bee our marke, and godlinesse our race: here wee shall bee satisfied, as hauing assurance by faith, and yet still desire, beeing ledde forward by hope, that so wee may at length obtaine the fulnesse of our desire, in the end of our faith, which is the fulnesse of ioy for euermore.

Obser. 100. The wicked, winners or loosers fare the worse by sinne.

Thus wee may see (for conclusion of this point) that whether the wicked winne or loose in sinne, theres no gaine on eyther side. The *King* hee takes his libertie more freely, and is a looser thereby, hee encreaseth his sinne by abusing the chastitie of others, and putting off repentance by a new supplie; and his body also gettes nothing by the bargaine: as for the poore *Concubine*, her

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her losse is apparant, shee parts full vnwillingly with the bed of her pleasure, and meetes vntimely with the house of her sorrow, *shee burnes* within, and *freezeth* without, the King hath so his desire that hee may be lesse satisfied; the Concubine hath not hers, and therfore is not satisfied, and yet the Lord most righteous herein: who in not giuing her her present desire, satisfies her inward and maine purpose, & by this meanes inflameth the same, namely neuer to be satisfied, but euer to burne in lust. *Let this* impose silence to all bragging of diminishing of sinne; the *begger* he flatters himselfe that hee is not prodigall, and the gelded person that hee is not incontinent: what gets hee hereby, seeing hee would be so? The great one he boasts that he steales not for neede, he flatters himselfe that hee hath enough to doe at home, what doth this aduantage him if he steale without neede? nay how shall we know hereby, but that he would if he had need whether wee be restrained in what we would, or enioy our desire to the vtmost: sinne got ground in both; the outward restraint encreaseth the inward desire, and the inward desire is also enraged by the outward accomplishment thereof. *Let vs* therefore labour first to rectifie our desires by the word of GOD, *labour* wee to haue our persons accepted of GOD, so sinne restrained, or committed, shall bee lesse desired. And so much concerning the abhominable custome of these Concubines. Now let vs see how GOD bringeth light out of darkenesse. It followeth.

Verse. 15. 16 17 18.

Now when the course of Hester *the daughter of* Abihail *the Vnckle of* Mordecay, *which had taken her as his one Daughter came, that shee should goe into the King, &c.*

In these foure next verses, the holy Ghost sets downe vnto vs, 1. the *admittance* of *Hester* into the *Kings* presence, 2. *her aduancement* to the mariage bed, and so to the

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the kingdome, and 3. *the solemnitie* thereof. And that still wee may see the Lord is like himselfe in vsing fitte meanes to bring good things to passe: the spirit of God sets downe in this 15. verse, diuerse notable circumstances to shew the orderly and worthy admittance of this poore captiue to so great soueraignetie. First, it is sayd, *When the course of* Hester *came*, that is; shee is not hoysed on the suddaine, least shee might bee vnprepared, and puffed vp therewith: neither is she called *before her course*, least her fellowes might enuie her, as being grieued at it: neither shall she stay after her course to put her out of hope: but euen in the fit time.

Obs. 98. Gods children are aduanced in conuenient time.

When her course came, then is she called, then is shee aduanced. So when his appointed time came, and the councell of the Lord had tryed him, *then did the King send for Ioseph* and loose him, then was hee deliuered and made Lord of the house.

Thus hath God an appointed time to aduance his Children, which shalbe *fitteſt* and most comfortable for them, *that* they may know their aduancement is
1 not by chance: but determined of the LORD: *that*
2 *they might* wait with patience the LORDS good ley-
3 sure, *and bee confirmed in faith*, for the accomplishment thereof.

Vse 1. And therefore, *as in vaine* do the wicked threaten, (as if the times were in their hands) because *Eliah* shall prosper, and his word shall preuaile against *Iezabel*: *so weake is the faith* of GODS children, that
2 will prescribe GOD his time: seeing when it is fit-
teſt then it shall come to passe, and art thou wiser then
3 GOD? *Oh* that we would be still! and the LORD
4 would establish our hearts? *that wee would fit our selues*, to the time, that God hath appointed.

Pro. 23 18 *Surely there is an end and thy hope shall not bee out of, yea the patient abiding of the righteous shalbee gladnesse.*

And

And seeing the Lord will *not hide* from his children what may be for their good, and they that *liue by faith* may see a farre of, though the times and seasons are in the hands of God, yet hath he not left vs without very probable markes, whereby we may discouer the time of *a deliuerance*, that so we may be better fitted to the entertainment thereof and be confirmed in our faith, in the enioying of the same: when the signes do graciously answer our expectation. *Obs.*102. The apointed time of deliuerance is not obscurely to be gathered out of the word.

To this pupose is it, that as the Lord hath *appointed* a time when he will deliuer his Church; so doth he also in the word discouer the same; and also not obscurely layes open the markes of his childrens apprehension thereof. And these are either in regard of *God who is* the delyuerer, or in respect of *them-selues* that are to be deliuered, or in regard of *their enemies* from whome they are to be deliuered. Tokens hereof. 1 2 3

Concerning almighty God as he is the onely deliuerer of his Church: so doth he commend him-selfe vnto vs by some speciall actions in the word; when he purposeth to deliver his people; while his people are vnder the burthen, he is said to be a *sleepe* to *forget* them, to be *angry with them, &c. not* that indeed he is angry, but because he showes such effects, which wee do being angry: *neither* that he forgets them, otherwise then not to answere their present desires, *neither indeed* is hee otherwise a sleepe, then that gratiously preseruing them in the estate of their affliction, he doth not yet deliuer them out of the same. *But* when the Lord purposeth to deliuer his people, then the spirrit discribes him in another manner. Namely that he *awaketh* and *rowseth vp him-selfe* as one out of sleepe, *he returneth to his people*, and hath compassion on them and he repents him of the euill. &c. And that we may know that the Lord is awake he doth manifest the same by many notable signes of his speciall prouidence. 1. In respect of God. Psal.74. Psal.77. Psal.74. Psal.102.

As

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Isay.59. 17. 18. *As first he puts on righteousnesse as an habergeon & an helmet of saluation vppon his head: hee puts on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and is clad with zeale as a cloake.* To what end? *Surely to make recompence to requite the fury of his aduersaries*, with a recompēce to his enemies, he will fully repay ỹ Ilands; mark I pray you how the holy Ghost sets down the order of ỹ execution of Gods recompence 1. *He makes inquirie* of the fury of his aduersaries, *he comes* Genes. 18. *downe to see* whether they haue done altogether according Psal, 9. 12. to that cry against God and his children: *He makes inquisition for blood*, and remembers it: and forgets not the complaint of the poore. But doth the Lord make this inquisition? How doth hee approue the righteousnes of the complaint of the poore?

Psal, 44. Surely, 1, *By making it* apparent that his children for his sake suffer all these euills, in that neither would their ene- Exod, 5. mies persecute them, if they would renounce their God, & 1 Sam, 24. 26. yet they shall giue testimony of their righteousnesse, though for their credits they must still proceed against them. So was our Sauiour Christ approued by *Pylate* & his wife: so did *Saul* iustifie *Dauid* and yet he continued persecuting of him: so haue Gods children bene iustified by their enemies. By which it commeth to passe that the more the godly are iustified, the wicked are more inraged, and so laye more grieuous burthens vppon the Church of God. What followeth here-vpon. *Now* doth the Church of God increase her cries, and so the Lord doth yet further shew him-selfe for ỹ deliuerance therof. Namely he 2 Iudge, 5. raizeth vp some *extraordinary Champions* to venture them- Nehem. 2. selues for the reskuing of his people: Now stands vp *Ne-* 4 Hester. *hemiah*, and now resolues *Hester*, if I perish I perish; Now Exod. 4. is *Moyses* sent forth though sore against his will.

And wil not ỹ Lord accompany these his seruants with extraordinary power? Yea surely: behold here a *third note* 3 Gen. 15. 14. when God will deliuer his people: Namely hee will send Psal, 106. fearefull signes into the *Land of Ham*, and shew his wonders in *Egipt*, and the *red Sea*, that so the wicked may bee compelled

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compelled, to lette his people go: he will send Emeroids among the *Philistines*, and soare plagues vppon the vncircumcised, that so they may bee compelled to send ſ Arke home. Thus will the Lord *Iudge the Nation before he deliuer his people*; that their hearts hereby being hardned, & more indurate against God and his people, the deliuerance of the Church may be more free and glorious, and ſ confusion of the wicked more iust and fearefull. Thus doth the Lord awake and returne when he will deliuer his children, giuing them herein these apparant markes. Namely, First *The clearing* of his children by the mouthes of their enemies: Second, *The raizing some* vp among them to spend their liues in his cause. Third, inflicting many secret and open iudgements vpon their mallicious enemies. So before he deliuered his Church from the tyrants of Antichrist among vs, were not some of the persecutors made fearefull spectators of Gods wrath, to bridle or harden the rest? And to iustifie the Church of God?

1 Sam, 5. Genes, 18. 14. Fox.

And surely if we do consider the state of the Church of God, when the Lord prepares it to a gratious deliuerance, we shall find many euident tokens therein: to giue good hope of the hastening of the work: by which we may be confirmed in the expectation thereof.

2 In regard of the church.

To this purpose we may obserue a different estate of ſ Church of God vnder troubles. First, *she* standes vpon her priuiledge, as if she had wrong herein; *shee* looks to former times, and meruailes why she is thus: 2. *she* growes impatient vnder the burthen, and complaines of her louers, that they haue deceiued her; *she* dissembles with God and seekes to humaine helpers: *she* yeelds to the present necessity, and so she bowes her neck to the yoakes, and her conscience to the lust of the oppressor: *she* giues her most pretious things for meat, *and* obiecting her selfe to the iniquitie of the time, she giues ouer hope euer to rise againe. Thus you shall find to haue beene the state of the Church of God vppon it entrance into captiuity: and so along toward the time of her appoynted deliuerance. As the

Prophets

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Vid. Ierem, 41.42. Lament, 2.3. 1 Lamen, 11. Ezech.

Prophets do moſt liuely decipher the ſame: who liued with them in the captiuity, and obſerued their vſe therof. And ſurely if we obſerue the prouidence of God herein: *doth* it not exceedingly iuſtifie this righteous hād of god againſt his church? *Doth* not the church of God hereby ſink deeper in the myre, and ſo ſet her ſelfe more ſtrongly in the bondes of Gods iuſtice, that ſo the time appointed of her trouble may be accompliſhed ouer her? *And doth* not the Lord admirably by this meanes bring light out of darkeneſſe, and ſo prepare his Church to her appointed deliuerance? Yea ſurely the more Gods children wreſtle with the rod, the more they are beaten, and at length tired therewith: and ſo in the end being throughly weary, ỹ poore church of God would gladly find ſome reſt. And ſeeing *the hope of the Hils* is but in vaine, and ſhe findes it too true that her louers haue deceiued her: Therefore ſhee *reſolues to go and returne to her firſt husband: to looke vp vnto the Lord and wait for God her Sauiour*: Aſſuring her ſelfe that her God will heare; And being fully reſolued that *if there be iniquity in her hand, the Lord will not heare her prayers*; therefore ſhe purpoſeth to forſake her Louers, and renounce her ſinnes. Heere is it, that ſhee *weepes continually and giues no reſt to her eyes*, becauſe the Lord hath forſaken his reſt: And that her ſorrow may be more kindly, and take deeper impreſſion, Shee *remembers Syon*, while ſhe ſits in *Babilon: ſhee remembers all her pleaſant things*, that ſhe had in times paſt: And withall remembers her rebellion which was the cauſe of that great loſſe: And ſo apprehends her affliction from the cauſe and greatneſſe thereof: Thus is ſhee brought to iuſtifie the Lord, *becauſe ſhee hath rebelled againſt him*, And beeing ſent out of her ſelfe by an holy diſpaire, *acknowledging that ſhe is worthy to bee cutte off*: Shee recouers ſtrength in God from her owne weakeneſſe: the more vile ſhee findes her ſelfe, the more ſhee ſtriues with her God to reſtore her beautie vnto her, ſhee layes hold on GODS promiſes for the

Ierem, 3. 1 Lamen. 19. Oſea, 2. Mich, 7. Pſal, 66. Lamen, 1. Pſal, 137. Lamen, 5. 18. 1 Lamen, 7. 1 Lamen, 18. Pſal, 6. Ezec, 28. 45. 1 Lamen, 21. 22.

confuſion

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confusion of her enemies, and in their confusion sees a farre off her deliuerance; here she staies not, but drawes neerer vnto God; and so yet further abaseth her selfe in the fury of her misery, and so farre she wades in the apprehension thereof as that she dispaires of Gods mercy; shee concludes in her weakenesse, *that her strength and hope is perished from the Lord.* Being thus past hope, and so euen her spirituall weapons fayling her; now she is recouered by the Lord, & hopes aboue hope: she confirmes her faith from former experience, and comforts her selfe in hir true humiliation; and so gathers assurance *that the Lord wil not forsake for euer.* She is perswaded he will returne: she *sees* him comming a farre off: Here-vpon *she* prepares her selfe to meete her God by examining of her selfe, and trying her waies; *she* incounters her God by earnest and hearty prayer, though shee haue the repulse; yet she will haue no nay: *Her eye droppeth without stay, till the Lord looke downe and behold from heauen.*

Lament, 2. Lament, 3. Lamen, 5 21. Lam, 3. 54. Lamen 3. 23. 24. 56. 57. 58. 59. 31. 40. 41. 44. 45.

And considering the promises of God for the reseruing of the Church: she presseth the *Lord to arise and haue mercy vpon* Syon; and by the power of faith gathers y the appointed time is come. *That his seruãts might delight in the stones thereof; and shew compassion vnto the dust of the same.* Thus is the Church changed and purged inwardly, that so shee may bee fitter for outward glory: And so being fitted, shee applaudes the time thereof, not so much for her owne good, as for the glory of God, which shall be magnified in the restoring thereof. And from hir own estate may the Church of God gather apparant notes of her deliuerance.

Psal. 102. 14. 15.

Now if wee shall looke into the *practises of Gods enemies*: they will also teach vs to gesse at the time of the Churches deliuerance. VVhen they make no spare of destroying, and will roote out *GOD'S word, then it is time for the Lord to put to his hand, for they haue destroied thy law*, whē by their pollicy, & cruelty they haue made such hauock, that there is none to offer him-selfe in the

3 In regard of our enemies. Psal. 119.

cause

Esay 59. 16. cause of God: then shall the Lords arme saue it, his righteousnesse it selfe shall sustaine his cause: when they shall open their mouthes against heauen, and blaspheme the Psal. 6. 12. power and mercy of God. *Then I wil vp (saith the Lord)* Psal. 9. 16. *to auenge the poore, then shall the Lord be knowne by executing of iudgements, the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all* May, 28. 15. *the Nations that forget God:* Yea, *when the wicked haue made a couenant with hell*, and so in their security do blesse their soules: as if they had Gods children so sure, that none could deliuer them: as if their happinesse were so 1 Thess. 5. 3. sure, that none could remoue them: *Then shall a sodaine destruction come vpon them: and they shal not be able to auoid it.* Then shall the destruction of the wicked bee the deliuerance of the Church. Thus euen from our enemyes wee may heare good newes of deliuerance; their owne mouthes will tell vs, their practises cannot hide it.

Psal. 111. *Obs.* 103. Gods children in this life aduanced to higheſt dignity.

A second probabilitie of *Hesters* aduancement, *is that* shee is of the seed of the righteous, which shall be mighty on the earth; she is say they, *The daughter of* Abihail *the Vncle of* Mordecai .i. She is a Iew to whom belongeth the birth-right, whose priuiledge it was to rule the Nations; to whom *Esau* and all his posterity should bow, and do homage.

1 *So faithfull* is the LORD in keeping couenant
2 for euer: *So truly* is Godlinesse profitable for this life: *so*
3 *all are* ours both by right and possession: *so are* Gods
4 children best able to vse prosperity: *so is eternall* happines
5 hereby sealed vp vnto them. So would the Lord hereby teach vs that these temporal blessings are not euil, because he bestowes them in greatest measure vppon them. The vses hereof see *Obs.* 79.

Onely wee may not here forget what the holy Ghost vouchsafes vs againe to remember.

Namely, that *Hester was taken by* Mordecai *for his daughter.*

Thus the Lord thinks it fit againe to make honourable mention

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mention of this charitable worke of *Mordecai*? *At* wherin he was glorified and *did delight therin, to confounde* the practize of the wicked, that seeke to obliterat the same and *to approue* to his children the acceptaunce of the same, as also to assure them hereby of the reward to come, *and withall* to prouoke the Saints to the imitation thereof. The good deeds of Gods children are not forgotten of the Lord.

Oh how vainely then doth the wicked hope to put out their names from vnder Heauen: whose names as they are written in the booke of life, so their workes also are regiſtred in the eternall word of God, *how wickedly* do they depraue, and obscure those gratious deeds, which the Lord of glory makes glorious by his remembrance? *how weake* are the Saints to doubt of their well doing, seeing the God of truth giues euidence thereto. *What comfort* may we haue in the acceptance of our labours, seeing the righteous Lord takes such delight in them? *how may* we be established against the reproches of the world? how little need we esteeme to *be iudged of men*, seeing it is God that approueth? who can condemne? *with what confidence* may we prepare our selues to stand before that righteous Iudge, who allready presents our prayers in the golden censor of his righteousnesse: and doth not onely make mention of vs, but mediation for vs at the throne of glory, that wee might not bee confounded in the day of refreshing? 1 2 3 4 5 1. Cor. 4. 6 Reue. 3.

A third likelyhood here set downe of *Hesters* aduancement, is her confidence in God and relying on his immediate prouidence, specified in this; *that it is said.*

She desired nothing but what Hege *the Kings Eunuch the keeper of the women said.*

Wherein the spirit of God would giue vs to vnderstand, that though the other maydens standing vpon there preferment, vsed all art to set out there beauty as the meanes thereof: and therefore spared not to demaund of the Eunuch such meanes of painting, &c. as might further the same, yet this gratious virgin, contenting her selfe with y image which God had set on her,

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and resting on the diuine prouidence, that had enclinde the heart of the Eunuch towards her: she doth not impudently presse him further then God should moue his heart: but humbly takes what *Hege* directs her to: who no doubt being enclined of the LORD to shew her extraordinary fauour; was also restrained of the LORD, that hee should not offer her otherwise then was fit for her profession. The LORD as it is likely, giuing her a like fauour in the eyes of this Eunuch as he gaue vnto *Daniel* with the other, that she was not defiled with this vaine and superfluous preparation; but as she was willing to leaue the Eunuch to his liberty, so the Eunuch also might leaue her to hers: how-so-euer, though in other things she might happily submit her selfe to the present necessity as to take that which the Eunuch offers her, and so might discouer her weakenesse and want, of courage, yet in this doth her faith appeare not obscurely that she doth not ambitiously seeke by corrupt meanes to aduance her selfe: but soberlie entertaines the meanes that are cast vpon her, resting on GODS prouidence for the good successe thereof. And surely (as I take it) wee may here obserue diuers notes of a liuelie faith.

Obse. 105. Gods children preferment is no faith.

Sect. 1. 3 Notes of faith.

One, that she presseth not impudently to insinuate into the fauour of this wicked Eunuch, though by the Kings authority shee might haue occasion thereto, lest shee should seeme to depend vpon him and giue him some aduantage ouer her precious liberty; To receiue what is offered by him, especially moued thereto by the LORD, *herein shee shewes her faith*; which knowing all was hers, doth herein take her right, and shewes her power therein, in that shee refuseth not her owne, though tendred by the wicked. Shee knew the prophanesse of the Eunuch could not make GODS blessings ineffectuall to his children. And therefore shee receiues them aright, though from an vnhurt possessor. *And lastly*, in that she vseth such ordinary meanes

as were offered, not seeking to aduance her selfe by adulterating, or prophaning of natures; herein also in the third place she sheweth her faith, which as it refuseth not meanes, so it is not curious of meanes; but takes what are offered, reiects such as are not *warrantable*.

Whereby we may learne that the aduancement of Gods children is warrantable and for their good, seeing it is in faith, and hereby to try our selues whether we be in the faith or no.

A fourth token of her aduancement is this which followeth. Note of Hesters aduancement.

And Hester *found fauor in the sight of all them that looked vpon her.*

Thus did the Lord make her gratious in the eyes of all men that her aduancement might be with more power, and lesse enuy: both for her owne and the good of others, *that shee* both to the wicked might be a great terror, as being conuinced with the brightnesse of maiesty appearing gloriously in her, *and the Godly* might haue a more gratious protection of her, yea her owne slippery estate might hereby be the better serued.

And surely; howsoeuer it be the property of GODS children to be hated of all men, yet is not this incident *vnto all*, or not at *all times*. Some may be exempted by speciall preuiledge: All at some-time shall haue a generall approbation. So had *our Sauiour* fauour with GOD and men, who after was hated of all and forsaken of his owne, *so when the wayes of* man do please the LORD, hee will make all his enemies at peace with him: either they shall willingly approue him, or GOD shall extraordinarily bridle them: So doth *Hester* here finde fauour in the sight of all, not that happily some one might not repine at her: but generally the most part applauded her beautie, the LORD casting their eyes vpon her. *Obs.* 106. Gods children gratious in the eies of al men. Math. 10.

and their hearts toward her.

The speech I take it is hyperbolicall; we being by the vniuersall to vnderstand the most, or better sort, who giuing her intertainement the inferior durst not openly gainesay. And yet more likely for *Hester* to be applauded of all: because, as there was that apparent which might set the eyes of all vpon her, and moue their hearts towards her, namely her beauty, so that was concealed which would haue made her hatefull, namely her religion and country; especially wee are to ascribe this to the ouer-ruling hand of GOD, who thus giues her fauour generally with all, that so her fauour might be more easily perceiued, and constantly maintained with the King, who the rather would affect, where his people liked, and was likelier hereby to settle his affection, and so to continue it to *Hester* for the good of the Church. Howsoeuer for the comfort of GODS children let mee adde this further, that though it be our lotts generally to be hated, yet they that cry. *Crucifie* him, shall before *cry hosanna*; euen they shall be conuinced in conscience, that wee are to bee approued, yea their owne mouthes shall giue testimony vnto vs, if it shall then bee demaunded: why they doe after hate vs, the reason is plaine, because as they loued vs, to make vs like vnto them, or to like of them: that so the may fare the better for vs; so when they see that wo neither like of them, nor can be like vnto them: therefore they speake euill of vs, therefore they hate vs. Thus do the wicked loue vs, before they hate vs. *And doe* they not also approue vs euen while they prosecute their malice against vs? yea surely though they *thinke* they *do God good seruice*, while they thus hardly entreat vs, yet in that they persecute vs, they shew we are not of them, we are contrary to them. And do they not herein wonderfully iustifie the generation of the iust. *May would* they not fetch vs againe, when they haue made vs away? do they not approue vs when they haue made a rid-

Obs. 107. Wicked why hate Gods children being forced to approue them.

1. Pet. 4. 4.

Iho 16. 2. Ioh. 15.

a riddance of vs? elſe; *Why doe they build the tombes of the Prophets: and garniſh the* ſepulchers of the righteous: and ſay if we had beene in the daies of our Fathers, we would not haue beene partners with them in the bloud of the Prophets: What can we haue more? ſeeing they that hate vs do thus approue of vs? Is not the LORD wonderfull to cleare vs by the mouthes of our enemies? may not the Children of God haue this teſtimony to be approued of all? Math. 23. 29. 30.

And ſurely if we conſider the *power of GOD*; who hath the hearts of all men in his hands, *if wee* obſerue neither *bountie of Godlineſſe*, which is able to raiſh all: *If wee* wey the priuiledge that the Children of GOD haue, that all ſhall do ſeruice vnto them: *If wee* apprehend the purpoſe of GOD herein, to make the world more inexcuſable; wee ſhall finde it no hard matter with Gods Children to be approued generally, and haue fauorable reſpect of all that looke on them. 1.

And therefore as this may ſerue to commend the greateſt Godlineſſe, *So it* wilbe a heauie witneſſe againſt the vngodly that hate where they ſhould loue. *Oh what* comfort is here to Gods Children that the world ſhall iuſtifie them! *What vantage* haue they of the wicked whoſe tongues ſhall condemne themſelues to iuſtifie the righteous? *May wee* now hope to finde ſuch fauour as will ſerue the turne, when GOD at his pleaſure, ſhall turne all hearts towards vs? *And ſhall* we then make ſhip-wrack of a good conſcience to winne the fauour of men? Is there no way to bee gracious with the world but by doubting with it? Oh that we would trie God in this caſe! how ſhould we preuaile with men? 1 2 3 4 5 6

Iacob. Gene. 32. *Obſ.* 108.

Well, what may we learne further out of this point, that *Heſter* being to be aduanced is thus gracious in the eyes of all?

Princes are to be gratious, in the eyes of their people.

Surely; that ſuch as are to be in authority, and raiſed to greatneſſe: they are to be gratious in the eyes of their peop'e

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people: *hereby* the Lord approues their gouernement: and so knitting the hearts of the people vnto them, confirmes and establisheth the same by this meanes: *the* blessinges of gouernment are plentifully inioied on either side; The Prince rules in loue, and the people obey in truth; and both subiect and people are prepared to eternall happinesse.

Oh that Princes would wisely lay this to their hearts! That they did know that the loue of their subiects is the best maintainer of the Crowne and armor of the Prince: Surely they would labour to gette and increase their loue, *by* requiring ingenuous seruice, *and accepting* it cheerefully; *by prizing* highly the liues of their people, *and preserving* their Christian liberty aboue their liues.

and by what meanes.
1. 2. 3 4.

Thus may Princes bee gratious in the eyes of their people, if *they estrange* not them-selues from them, nor vse them as strangers; especially *if they* make them gratious in the eyes of God, by giuing good examples vnto them, and prouiding for their instruction in the word of life.

5. 6. 7

Thus is Hester gratious in the eyes of all men. VVhat followeth here-vpon?

Verse, 16. Namely; *So* Hester *was taken vnto King* Ahashuerosh, *into his house royall in the tenth month, which is the month of* Tebeth, *in the seauenth yeare of his raigne.*

In which words the spirit of God sets downe the receiuing of *Hester* into the Kinges house, and the time thereof: that so this great benefit might bee the rather remembred.

Obs. 109. Gods children are not alwaies vnder the rod, but at length find deliuerance, from the same, &c.

And that this miserable captiue is; now taken to the royall Pallace of this great Monarch, and after many changes, and remouings from *Mordecaies* house to the house of the maidens; is at length brought to a place of rest and honour: Doth not this commend vnto

vs.

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vs the exceeding faithfulneſſe of God, that will not ſuffer his children alwayes to lye vnder the burthen, and continually to paſſe through fire and water, but at the length wil bring them to a wealthyer place. Pſal.66. ?

Did not *Ioſeph* at length ſee an end of his troubles? Was not *Mordecai* quiet at length? Did hee not finde reſt and honour? *Yea ſurely*, the Lord is merciſull, and will not alwayes bee chiding, becauſe mercy pleaſeth him: *he will returne* and haue mercy, that his people may glorifie him. *The rod of the vngodly* ſhall not alwaies reſt vppon the lot of the righteous, leaſt the righteous put forth his hand to wickednesſe. *The Lord* will heare the prayers of his children, *and he* will make them hidings for others, that are in trouble; *they ſhall* haue gratious experience of his mercyſull deliuerance, that they may bee more willing to committe themſelues to him in well-doing, and ſo be better fitted to their eternall reſt. 1 Mich,7. 2 Pſal,50.15. 3 Pſal,125. Pſal,21.2. 4 5

Loe thus ſhall the man bee bleſſed that feareth the Lord. *Reioyce not therefore* againſt me oh myne enemies, for though I fall yet I ſhall riſe againe. Oh that wee could wait the Lords leyſure and hee would eſtabliſh our hearts; *marke well* the iuſt man, and the end of that man is peace. *Faint not therefore* vnder the burthen; *neither* repine thereat, for thy Sauiour Chriſt doth beare the waight thereof: and at length he will eaſe thy ſhoulders of all; ſorrow may be in the euening, but ioy is in the morning. *I ſayd I was caſt out of thy ſight, yet will I looke backe towards thy holy Temple: For a little while did I forſake thee, but in euerlaſting compaſſion will I gather thee againe, though I vtterly deſtroy all the nations where I haue ſcattered thee, yet will I not deſtroy thee, but I will correct thee by Iudgement, and not vtterly caſt thee off: But I will guide thee by my counſel, and after bring thee to glory.* *Vſe.* 1. Mich,7.8,9 2 3 4 5 Ionas,2.7 Eſay,54.7.8. Ierem.30.11 Pſal.73.

Thus is *Heſter* now receiued into the houſe-royall of the King. *The Lord hath ſette her vp, and not ſuffered her foes to triumph ouer her, and becauſe the heart of his ſeruant truſted in the Lord and in the mercies of the moſt high:* Pſal,30. Pſal,21.

Psal.112 *therefore shee shall not slide: her heart is established in the Lord her God:* and therefore *shee will not feare vntill she see her desire vpon her enemies.*

And is not so great a blessing worthy remembrance? yea surely, the holy Ghost precisely sets downe the day and yeare thereof: that so we might be prouoked to remember the same And might learne that such blessings ought so long to be remembred of vs, as the daies and times continue in our vse. So hath the Lord tendered great blessings to his Church, at especiall times. *The returne of the captiuity* in the first yeare of *Darius*: *the passion* at the feast of the passe-ouer: *The gift of tongues*, at the feast of pentecost. &c.

Dan.1. Math.26. Act.2.

1. That the extraordinarinesse of the time, might put vs in minde of the extraordinary blessing, and be a continuall remembrance of the same for the praises of God. So hath the Church of God appointed and set solemne times for the perpetuall remembrance of great blessings: and commended therein the celebration of Gods blessings, for euer, so was the 14. day of *Ader* set apart to this purpose by *Hester* and *Mordecai*: so is the 5. of November consecrated to the remembrance of the most admirable deliuerance of the *Britaine* State and people from the gunpowder treason. And surely, as these great fauours of God are liuelie testimonies of his power and goodnesse: so are they worthy to be had in remembrance, yea very profitable is the remembrance thereof to vs, both to stirre vp our thankfulnesse, and encrease our faith, that so they may be sanctified, continued and encreased vpon vs; yea be vndoubted pledges of eternall happinesse.

Hest.9.

*Obser.*110. Great mercies of God are to be had in remembrance by special time appointed thereto.

And therefore seeing the Lord hereby prouides, that his blessings may not be forgotten, and so passe without their true vse; *this may* serue for the great condemnation of the world: who on the contrarie, vseth all occasions to put out the remembrance of Gods mercies from the earth: *either* vtterly Gods mercies to their vse or *desert*, or putting them off to *strond causes* as if

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not

not the LORD but ſome ordinarie meanes had compaſſed the ſame: or which is worſt of all imputing them to blind chance &c.. *And are not* they alſo faultie herein, that diminiſh and obſcure the great workes of GOD, either not *regarding* them at all, or *ſpeaking baſely* of them? *What* ſhall we thinke of theſe, that gnaſh their teeth hereat, that repine that the Lord ſhould bee gracious vnto his people? *And are* there not ſome that thinke ſuch great deliuerances are diſcredits vnto a people, as ſignifying what they had deſerued: and what ſome of their owne bowells would haue executed on their Fathers and brethren. 2 3 4

May nor pollicie aduize that ſo great mercies of God ſhould be ſuppreſſed, leſt the reioycing thereof, vpbraiding the wicked ſhould prouoke them to renue their malice and multiplie their miſchiefes? *Surely* if there were no other euidence to condemne vs of vnthankefulneſſe, yet the generall ſecurity of a people and encreaſe of ſinne, is a fearefull witneſſe of their forgetfulneſſe of a bleſſing: and ſo may bee a meanes to turne it vnto a curſe. 5 6

Well let vs looke our faces wiſely in this glaſſe: and as the Lord hath offered vs time to remember ſo great mercies: ſo let vs daylie meditate on the wonders of our GOD. *Let vs* keepe a regeſter of Gods bleſſings that we may keepe our ſelues in the poſſeſſions of them. *And* let vs withall keepe an account of our ſinnes: that ſo we may ſee, what need we haue of Gods mercie, and ſo the rather meditate thereon. 7 8 9

And for our comfort let vs further learne this; that as God neuer beſtowes great bleſſings but they ſhall be truelie ſanctified vnto ſome: ſo if that by this holie remembrance, we ſhall keepe our right in them, we ſhall not onely be deliuered in the euill day, when the LORD ſhall take vengeance on the vnthankefulneſſe of the world: but we ſhall ſee ſome greater things then theſe; the LORD will deale wonderfully 10

betweene

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betweene *Israel* and *Ægipt*: when the obstinate shalbe confounded: then shall the righteous flowrish: yea the Lord will prouide meanes for the constancy of their happinesse: for so it followeth.

Vers. 17. *And the King loued* Hester *aboue all the women, and shee found grace and fauour in his sight more then all the Virgins: so that hee set the crowne of the Kingdome vpon her head: and made her Queene insteede of* Vashty.

In which words the spirit of God, setteth downe what befell *Hester* after her taking into the Kings house. Namely that she is aduanced further *to bee Queene* in steed of *Vashtie*, which is notably described. First by the occasion hereto; Namely that *the King loued her aboue all the women*. And secondly by the signe of this preferment, *hee set the crowne of the Kingdome vpon her head*.

Obs. III. God makes his children gratious when it may serue for his glory and their good.

Concerning the extraordinarie fauour and affection, that the King is here sayd to beare vnto this gracious maiden. As it was the admirable worke of God for her more speedie and sure aduancement, necessarily to be taken at this time, when the yron was in the fire: *Carnall* loue being so inconstant, *especially* when it is in some sort satisfied: *And the* poore maiden (no doubt) much humbled with yeelding to the present necessity; and therefore had neede of some meanes to cast light out of darkenesse, that their might be hope of sanctifying of this sinne into her: So doth it herein most notably commend the *power*, *mercie* and *Wisdome* of GOD vnto vs.

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2

His power in this: that he both can turne the affections of the wicked vpon his Children, and settle them constantlie therevpon, when as the cause in them rather threatenes change.

His wisdome also appeares in this: that this extraordinary fauour of the Prince, being now necessary, for the aduance-

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aduancement of *Hester*, and so for the good of the Church, though afterward it bated (to shew the inconstancie of flesh, and also a further power of God in the reuiuing of the same) yet now it increaseth contrarie to the carnall occasion, which being satisfied, vsually breedes loathing: especiall in those, whose honour and delight is in change, so that aboue all the rest onely *Hester* is gracious: the fauour of this great Monarche is constant to her.

And the mercie of God doth also shine herein most comfortably, both to the good of the Church, and particular contentment of his seruant.

The Church hereby is now prouided for a deliuerer: before she be plunged into the extremitie of her daunger: and the *poore maiden* is by this aduancement recompenced for hir losse; and comforted also in some measure with the sanctifying of the same in a lawfull calling?

Aud surely that the Lord prouided a Sauiour before man had sinned: that *Moyses* is borne before *Israels* oppression is encreased; that *Iosephes* aduanced before the famine is in *Canaan*: that *Hester* is aduanced before *Hamans* conspiring breakes forth, *doth not* this exceedingly commend the watchfulnesse of GOD ouer his Church? *Doth not* this manifest the freenesse of his loue, that goes before the particular obiect? *Doth* not this serue much to the confirmation of our faith, that before we call he will heare vs, before we haue neede hee willl prouide for vs? So did the LORD prouide an *Elizabeth* before the great and sharpe storme fell vpon his Church.

Obser. 112. God prouides a deliuerer for his Church before it be cast into the extremity of daunger. Esay 65. Math. 6.

Vse 1. And shall we then feare that the Lord will forsake vs in our troubles when he prouides meanes of deliuerance before troubles come? Is he a God a farre off, and shall we not beleeue him to be a GOD nere at hand? *Oh let* vs learne to liue by faith, so shall we see a farre off! *Let it* stay vs in our present troubles, that 2 Pet. 1. 8.

God

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Pſal,139. 4 God loued vs before we were: *that euen* when we were his enemies, he ſought vs, and preuented vs, and ſhall he not now much more reſkue vs beeing his friends? Oh wee of little faith!

*Obſ.*113. The mercies of God to his children paſt finding out. But are the mercies of God here at an end? No ſurely, the mercies of the Lord are euerlaſting, and his truth paſt finding out: *Wade* wee yet further into them in this particular caſe of *Heſter*, and let vs willingly looſe our ſelues in the meditation thereof. Was it not *a great mercy of the Lord*, to aduance her to the Kinges houſe: And was it not *a greater mercy* that in the Kings houſe ſhee is humbled, that ſo by renuing her repentance ſhee might bee better fitted to her further eſtate. *And was not the mercy of God very admirable herein*, that being abaſed by the King, ſhe yet finds extraordinary fauour in his ſight, that ſo ſhee might finde comfort in her former ſorrow? But *was* it not yet a further mercy, that beeing a ſubiect, yea a ſtranger, and of the abhominable and inthralled Nation; yet ſhee is called to *bee the lawfull wife* of ſo mighty a Monarch, and, not onely ſo, *but euen to bee aduanced* to the hygheſt dignitye of all.

1 Iohn,13.2. 2 1 Tit,14. 3 Rom,8.29. *So conſtant is the* LORD, that whome hee loueth, hee loueth to the end: *Such a priuiledge hath godlyneſſe* that to the pure all thinges are pure: *So ſure is our ſaluation* that euen all thinges ſhall turne to our good.

Vſe. 1. *And ſhall wee* then ſinke vnder the burthen 2 of our ſinnes, ſeeing wee cannot ſound the depth of the mercies of God? *Shall* wee plead vnwiſely againſt GOD, ſeeing hee cannot chooſe but loue vs, ſeeing his loue is manifeſted in our ſinnes, and his power in 3 our weakeneſſe? *Shall* wee *repine* at his chaſtiſements, 4 ſeeing of very faithfulneſſe hee doth correct vs? 5 *Shall wee* diſtruſt his bleſſinges, ſeeing hee beſtowes them in mercy? *Surely*, if we ſee not mercy euery where wee want the eye of faith, *And if wee laye not* hold

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hold *of eternal mercies*, we fight not ỹ good fight of faith. 1 Tim. 4.

But lette vs examine a little further this case of *Hester*? May wee truly say that here's nothing but mercy? Was it the mercy of God, that shee should bee so highly aduanced? VVhy then doth the spirit teach Gods children to pray, that the Lord would not giue them neither *powerty* nor *riches*: least *beeing full* they should *deny him*: *being empty* they *should blaspheme God*. *Obs.* 114. Whether great prosperity be a blessing in mercy to Gods children. *Obiect.* Prouer. 30.

Ans. Surely the prayer of the seruant of God, as it was conditionall, not simply renouncing either fulnesse, or want, but as it might stand with the will of God and good of the receiuer: so thereby doth it graunt a power vnto God, to giue either fulnes or impose wat at his pleasure. And seeing where God giues in loue, he also sanctifies the gift, may not then the Lord giue fulnesse, and yet preserue in humility, and obedience? May he not lay powerty on his child, and yet keepe him from impatience? Yet at least so farre as that he shall not take the name of God in vaine: Indeed if nature be left to it selfe, and that as this most likely and vsuall be considered in this case: *fulnesse* may breed *forgetfulnesse*, and powerty prophanesse and distrust of Gods prouidence. And therefore in regard of our weakenesse and aptnesse to offend in the excesse: *Yea* considering our folly, that wee knowe not whats fittest for vs; and the *wisdome* of God, which wee must not sette to schoole: The spirit teacheth vs rather to pray for the meane, that God would feede vs with food conuenient for vs, neither yet simply to tye God to this measure, as if no other were fit for vs, but to acknowledge herein our infirmity to God, who as without GOD wee are not able to compasse any, so least able to sway that state, w is most subiect to temptation: & yet this doth not preiudice, but God may giue euen fulnes: seeing hee doth make euen ỹ greatest honors conuenient for his children, and therein doth shew his great mercy in their preseruation: by how much the more their estate is subiect to temptation.

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Quest. VVhether a man may praie for aboundance?

Yet if it shall now be demanded, seeing the Lord giues fulnesse, whether I may not lawfully seeke it by prayer of him?

Ans. Surely where God in *particular hath promised*, and leades me along with *apparant likelyhoods* thereof, there I may safely draw on the Lord, to the accomplishment of his worke; because by faith we obtaine the promises: and prayer is the meanes to expresse and increase our faith. And this was the case of *Dauid* when he prayed for the accomplishment of Gods promise concerning the Kingdome. *But where* there is no such manifestation of Gods purpose in perticular, there I may safely *desire in generall* what God will cast vppon me for my fitting vnto him: but for this or that condition, I must leaue it to God, least I *preiudice his wisdome*, and *discouer my distrust*, *least I presume to come to god*, wheras al he giues vs *is* of free mercy. *Only I deny* not but some *extraordinary instinct* may warrant some perticuler extraordinary practise in this case: which being singular, is not to be imitated of vs.

Quest. Whether it be lawfull to receiue great blessings offered?

If it shall be further demanded whether it be lawfull to receiue such excellent blessings as are cast vpon vs, seeing *Elisha* refused *Nahamans* gifts, &c. *Daniel* at the first refused the Kings reward;

Ans. Surely I see not, *but God being the only giuer*, and wee 1 *hauing the best right*; *much good likely to be redeemed* here- 2 by, *and good meanes* vsed in the compassing thereof; these 3 thinges considered, I see not but we may lawfully receiue 4 them, as the speciall pledges of Gods fauor: if there be no leprosie or such like mischiefe attending vppon them.

As for *Elisha* and *Daniel*, their refusal was iust, because the giftes of these giuers were respectiue and conditional, if they would doe such a thing for them, or in regard of such a thing done: and therefore the seruants of God, to shew they were not mercenary, did iustly refuse these reprochfull giftes. (Say you) *may* we not then receiue a recompence in lieu of our paines? Is not the labourer worthy of his hire? May hee not iustly exact it? May he not lawfully

Quest. Whether the Minister may receiue wages for his paines?

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lawfully receiue it?

Yea surely, the Lord hath appointed, that they which seruе at the Altar should liue of the Altar: *It is a sinne not to giue: It is a greater* sinne to spoile and deny: and therfore it is most lawfull to receiue what is due vnto vs. And *yet sometime we may refuse*, though not simply as *Elisha* did: *Sometime we may not exact*, though we haue power, *as the blessed Apostle Paul* did. Yea may *refuse* first, & yet receiue afterward, as *Daniel did*: *refuse* wee may when the wicked thinke our paines no better worth then their gifts, or hope that only by these gifts they may compasse the benefit of our paines: *So did Daniell* first refuse the gifts of the King: *So did Peter refuse* the gifts of *Simon Magus*; And yet to shew our *right*, wee may also receiue them for our vse; when these stumbling-blockes are remoued: *So did Daniel* afterward receiue those honours which before he refused. And was there not some such stubling-block in the aduancement of *Hester*? Might she safely marry with him that was diuorced from his wife? (and acccording to the custome of these countries) was not without his choyce of wiues. *Surely* the Lord Iesus him-selfe the most perfect examiner of the Law, he hath determined, y who soeuer puts away his wife, vnlesse it be for fornication, commits adultery: And therefore it followeth that whosoeuer marrieth with the party, that takes this liberty to be diuorced, not vpon that vrgent occasion; doth no lesse commit adultery. And did not the Lord therefore (though hee had abundance of spirit) yet appoint this knot in marriage to bee onely of two, and no more: because he sought an holy seed? How then may *Hester* bee cleared from the case of adultery? How can she bee freed from an vnholy marriage?

1 Cor, 9.

1 Cor. 11.

Quest. Hesters marriage whether lawful or no?

Answ. *May* not the Law-giuer *dispence* with his Law? And may not that in *Hester* be good by a dispensation; which in others without such extraordinary priuiledge, is simply euill? And what though the Lord shoulde admitte sinne in the accomplishment of the worke:

may

may hee not pardon the ſinner, and get him-ſelfe the glory. Surely though wee dare not ſimply iuſtifie *Heſter* in this caſe; yet if we ſhall meaſure things by the manner & ſucceſſe, did not the Lord admirably bring this thing to paſſe? Did it not tend to the great good of the Church.

Nay who I pray you were looſers hereby? *The Lord* hee winnes him-ſelfe great glory, in aduancing ſo highly his hand-maid from ſo baſe an eſtate. *Heſter looſes* not heereby, ſhee obtaines the greateſt honour and content that the earth can afford; and yet ſhee forſakes not her righteouſneſſe, but rather increaſeth it.

The King hee gaines hereby ſome truer contentment of his mind and reſtraint of his luſts, *yea his reproche* in repudiating *Vaſhty* is hereby well cured: *The Prouinces and whole Kingdome*, they obtaine reſt from their grieuous oppreſſions: *And the poore Church of God*, that is the greateſt gayner, as being deliuered from a moſt deſperate extremity, and aduanced alſo to great peace and proſperity, euen in a ſtrange land.

Queſ. Whether lawfull to marry with an Infidel.

But yet theris an other flaw in this marriage: *ſhe marries with* an Infidell and curſed Idolater: how may this bee diſpenſed withall?

Surely by the ſame Lord who brings light out of darkneſſe, and turnes the euills of his children to his glory, and their good. And yet wee may not ſimply condemne this maiden herein: ſhe was a ſubiect, and therefore could not do what ſhe would in this caſe. And yet the Lord here did what he would: *yea what Heſter* ſimply was not to refuſe. For though the Lord had commanded that his people ſhould not marry with Idolaters, yet doth he alſo not ſimply deny them vppon conditions to marry with ſuch captiues as they had taken in war. *And the Saints* of God haue warrantably matched with ſtrangers, & the Idolatrous brood &c. As *Boaz* with *Ruth*, *Sampſon* with the *Philiſtian* &c. When the occaſions haue beene *extraordinary* and the *diſpenſation heauenly*.

Ioſ. 23. Indg. 3. Deut. 21.

And

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And therefore no warrant for vs that haue choyce of holy seede to sowe amongst the thornes: thereby to wound our owne soules, and choake our seed, or else by the egge of the Serpent, to breed the Cockatrice, to haue mungrell issue, that shall speake halfe *Ashur* and halfe *Canaan*: shall not this vnequall yoake cast out the yoake of Christ? shall not the stranger deuoure our strength? shall not the curse of God cast out such roote and branches from the face of the earth?

Well, thus wee see the mercy of God truly iustified in *Hesters* aduancement: let vs now see how *Ahashuerosh* the King iustifieth and adorneth the same: It followeth.

Hee sets the Crowne of the kingdome vpon her head, and made her Queene, &c.

Loe here the ensigne of this great honour which is due vnto this poore captiue, the Crowne of the Kingdome is set vpon her head. So doth this new Bride-grome striue to doe all honour vnto his bride: *So doth* God confirme his child in this extraordinarie dignitie: *by this meanes is Hesters* aduancement made knowne to the Church of God, and by this *full performance* of *complement*, is more honored and approoued. But this is not all: *It followeth.*

Then the King made a great Feast to all his Princes and Nobles, &c. Verse, 18.

In which words the holy Ghost sets downe vnto vs the solemnization of this royall mariage, and that by fiue circumstances.

1. The King makes a great feast thereat to all his Princes and seruants.

2. This Feast is dedicated to the memoriall of *Hester*, *which was* Hesters *feast*.

3. Rest is giuen to the Prouinces, they are made partakers of this common ioy, that the mariage of *Hester* might be more acceptable to them.

4. The King giues gifts vnto the poore, and sends presents abroad farre and neere.

5. Hee shewes the power of the King in this his

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magnificence, to signifie his true contentmẽt & ioy in this mariage. And first, to adde greater state & solemnity to ỹ mariage of his new spouse, the King yet further makes a solemne feast to all his Princes and Nobles; of the lawfulnesse and right vse whereof we haue spoken plentifully heretofore. Only thus much we may further adde concerning the occasion of this feast: that the custome of solemnizing mariages with feasts hath beene ancient and commendable, as being a time of great ioy, and therefore fitte to be shewed in the meanes of ioy; especially in regarde of such company, as at such times come togeather: who may lawfully take occasion of a more liberall refreshing. And therefore not vnlawfull to bee vsed, and hereby euen of Christians, who as they know their libertie: so also they can best tell how to vse it, in a wise diuiding of the time, and moderation of Gods blessings.

Obser. 115. Feasting lawfull at mariages.

Obserue. That which followeth concerning the dedication of the feast to the memory of *Hester*; *as it* doth discouer the greater affection of the King towards his spouse: *so it magnifieth* yet further the mercy of God toward his seruant: who by this memoriall is commended to posteritie, and euen highly honored of the enemies of God: which though it be no warrant for that popish custome of dedicating feasts to the honor of Saints, vnlesse the fact of a wicked Prince shall iustifie the same: so notwithstanding in the equity thereof doth approue such holy remembrances of the Saints of GOD, which may both put them in minde of Gods mercies towards them; and prouoke posterity to an holy imitation thereof: as *tombes, trophes, &c.* Thus doth *Ahasuerosh* celebrate the memory of *Hester* by a solemne feast; and so shall the children of God bee honored of their enemies, so shall their names and memorials be continued to posteritie.

Dedication of feasts to the memory of particular persons.

And yet the affection of this Monarch stayes not here: but yet further to grace this wedding of *Hester*, behold, *he giues rest to the Prouinces*, which were euen tyred with taxes and exactions: *so do the* wicked fare the better euen for

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for Gods children sake: *so doth the Lord make away* for his children, euen to be iustified of the wicked.

And surely whither he caused these nuptials generally to be solemnized throughout his kingdome, by setting a part the day thereto, that the subiect might bee partaker in the Princes ioy, and celebrate his mariage with feasting and libertie; or rather spared his subiects for the time, of some tribute that was due. This as it makes to the great honor and celebration of *Hesters* mariage, because God being glorified, there is peace with men; so it also serues to the great approbation of godlinesse, the whole land is at rest, when Gods Church is respected, when Gods children are aduanced, when the righteous are in authoritie, then the people reioyce; then is great glory, great peace and contentment. *So doth* the Lord sanctifie great blessings vnto his children, that they may be *good foundations* against ỹ day of Christ: *so doth* he secure hereby their ticklish estates, by knitting the hearts of the people vnto them, through the benefit therof. So doth he make ỹ world without excuse, when they shall hate that which is the onely cause of their greatest honor, security & contentmẽt.

Obs. 116. When the righteous are aduanced the people reioice Prou. 29. 2 Prou. 28, 12

2

1. Tim. 6

3

4

Vse. And doth not this condemne the folly of men *that complaine* of *righteousnesse*, as if it were the greatest trouble-house & *trouble-state* that may be; *that thrust* out Gods children, as the only disturbers of their rest & happinesse; *are not they more then blind*, which see no profit in godlinesse, but still are poaring like the *Sodomits*, when the doore is before them: saying, *who will shew vs any good?* do not they open their mouthes against heauen, *that say it is in vaine to serue the Lord? Are not* they the greatest enemies to themselues, that keepe downe Gods children, and hinder their aduancement; *that* aboue all things feare least the Lord should bee glorious in his Saints; *least hee should set his King vpon his holy hill of Syon*: Surely if the *sonne of GOD*, bring a Sword vpon the earth, it is not because hee is not the *Prince of peace*, because hee offers not also peace vnto them: but because the world refuseth *peace*, therefore doe they plucke downe a Sworde vpon them,

Nehem. 2. 19

Iob. 21. 15

Psal. 4.

Malach. 3

Psal. 2. Math. 10. 34 Luk. 12. Esay. 9 Math. 20

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and the corner stone becomes a rock of offence. And if any be afraide, wherein they should take most comfort; they are the sinners in *Sion*, that are thus afraide; feare takes hold vpon the hypocrites: these indeed shall not dwell with the deuouring fire: *these cannot endure the*
Malach. 3,2. 3.4 *euerlasting burning.* What flesh *shall endure* when hee appeares; *who is like a purging fire, and like Fullers Soape?* Yet shall the siluer abide the touche, and be purified thereby, yea the sonnes of *Leui shall be fined and prepared*, that they may *bring offerings vnto the Lord in righteousnesse. Then shall the offerings also of* Iudah *and* Ierusalem *bee acceptable vnto the Lord, as in old time, and in the yeares before, yea the Lord will take away the iniquitie of the land in one day. Then*
Malach. 2. *shall many bee turned away from iniquitie, and yee shall call euery man his neighbour vnder the Vine, and vnder the Figtree.* Zach. 3.9.10. Then shall *Ierusalem be inhabited without walles, for the Lord will bee vnto her a wall of fire round*
Zach. 2.4.5 *about, and will be the glorie in the midst of her.* Then *will the Lord turne to the people a pure language*, that *they may all call vpon the name of the Lord, and serue him with one shoulder:*
1. One consent and without grudging. Oh that the Lord would arise, & haue mercy on *Syon, that he would take out of the midst of her them that reioyce of her pride, and are puffed vp*, in regarde of the holy mountaine:
Zeph. 3. 13 *that the lying and aquiuocating generation were rooted out, that the vile were seperated from the precious. Then should there be an humble and poore people*, and they would trust in the name of the Lord: then should there bee holy vessels vnto the Lord, yea euery pot in *Ierusalem* should be holy,
Ose. 14 *then should not* Ashur *saue them, neither would they ride vpon horses: but in their God, the fatherlesse should finde comfort.* The righteous Lord shall bee exalted in the saluation of his chosen.

Vse. Who so is wise and hee shall vnderstand these things, and prudent and hee shall know them: for the wayes of the Lord are righteous, and the iust shall walke in them, but the wicked shall fall therein. But of this point more fully (by Gods grace) hereafter. *It followeth.*

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Gods grace) hereafter. *It followeth.*

And gaue rest vnto the Prouinces, and gaue gifts according to the power of a King.

Obs. 117. Princes to the enioying of their pleasure, are to be carefull not to oppresse their subiects, but to giue some relaxation therewithall vnto them. Psal. 133. 1

In that this Persian Monarch here *releases* his subiects of the burthen of subsidies and taxations, when hee and his court do enlarge themselues in their pleasures: herein we may seeke shadow of that substance, which is required in Christian Princes: namely, that though their state and fulnesse affoord them pleasure and ease, by the toyle and labour of others, yet in the vse thereof, they should so indifferently behaue themselues, as to let this oyle of gladnesse runne downe to the skirts of the garment; that those may taste at least of the cup of their pleasure: *who haue* especially troad the Wine-presse, and prepared the cup vnto them: *and by* partaking therein, may both better beare the burthen, *and so* still maintaine the plough in going. 2 3

Little therefore do such Princes know what wrong they do themselues, when they will not speake comfortably to their people, much lesse allow them some immunity when they take their pleasures: *as hereby* esteeming their delight to be peereelesse and acceptable, because they are singular and aboue the reach of others, yea accounting their pleasures herein the better seasoned, when they are procured and enioyed with the paine & toyle of their people: *And lesse* doe such know what belongs to God, or the safety of their kingdomes, that giue the bridle to their subiects, to prophane Gods Sabaothes and contemne his word, that so they might lesse enioy them in their godlesse pleasures, or else the better endure such drudgery as they are put vnto, when wicked Princes runne ryot. *And surely* in that herein they thinke to gratifie their sinne, & granting pardon for any offence: this as it doth most dishonor God so it shall surely tend, to the reproach of such indulgence, as being the speciall meanes of the disobeying of gouernmẽt when God is dishonoured for the contentment thereof. *Oh that* gouerners were wise to consider these things:

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that they would consider how pleasures communicated are both lesse couled and lesse set by: and so both preuent danger in their vse and abuse also by wise intermitting the same. *And yet* ỳ they would be wise in yeelding this liberty, not to *cloake* their owne abuse, neither with the *dishonour* of God, not to the *iustifying* of sinne, nor *hardning* of sinners, not as if hereby they would *make demonstration* of their happinesse: or basely prostitute themselues to the lust of their people: but herein wisely acknowledging their *common condition by nature*, and so to become *equall with those of the lower sort: recompencing* hereby the labour of their subiects: and keeping herein that royal law, *euen to do to others as they would be done vnto themselues*: considering wisely that seeing they *are to weepe with them that weepe*: so they must not reioyce to make their subiects heauy. *And surely* if we consider this perticular wherein this heathen Prince gratifies his subiects, namely to release his subiects for a time of their continual taxes: as this was especially intended to honour his Nuptials, ỳ the loynes of his people might blesse their Prince, and his marriage: so we shall find it no small part of the Princes honour, as not vnnecessarily to exact vpon his people, for the satisfying of his pleasure: so euen to remitte somewhat of lawful exactions, to giue some breathing & intermission therto. *For is* hee not herein *a law vnto himselfe*, when in that which is lawful, he bounds him-selfe, & doth not what he may, but what is most expedient? And so ruling him-selfe, shall better rule his people: *Is* he not wisely to keepe *some stocke in store*, and not still to bee laying forth least hee haue not in the season to compasse the market: *Doth* hee not heereby keepe his subiects in heart; that they may still supply cheerefully whereas the King must loose his right, when there is no more to bee had; *And* then the King must supply when the subiect hath it not: Whereas otherwise the King receiuing moderately, the subiect may haue where-withal; and so both supplyed, and contented thereby.

Rom. 12. *Obs.* 18. Princes honour consists in the easing of their subiects of their continual burthens.

Surely

Surely happy are those Princes that *know their strength*; *Yet more happy* if they knew how to vse it: which is not to inioy their pleasures with their subiects payne, not to empty their people, to fill them-selues; but as to esteeme it their glory to haue multitude of people: *so wisely to maintaine this* multitude; and will they bee maintained with nothing? If they be still emptied how can they prosper? And how can they then bee the glory of the Kingdome? Wel *Behold* our *Persian* Monarch here doth not only giue rest vnto the Prouinces, but also-

Gaue gifts according to the power of the King. Thus euen the wicked, when they are imployed in Gods seruice, for the good of his Church, shall not only bee bridled from much euill which they would do, but indued also to doe much good in shew, though otherwise they would not do: Here's no *mention of drunkennesse, no calling for* Vashty: as were in the former feast. The marriage of Gods seruant shal not be dishonoured with such abuses. But what? here's rest giuen to the Prouinces who were like to indure heauier burthens; & gifts distributed according to ỹ power of the King, whose power is vsually seene in taking from his people. So doth God honour his children by restrayning the wicked: so doth hee harden the wicked in that they shall not want the shew of vertue in the seruice of those which yet notwithstanding onely for their vertue, they doe most deadly hate: so doth he get him glory by them both in confirming hereby the faith of his children, and ripening the wicked to their appointed damnation.

Obs. 119. Wicked bridled and furnished with good gifts for the good of the Church.

Obs. 120. Princes are to be liberall to their subiects.

And if wee shall further consider the bounty of this Monarch, in giuing gifts so magnifically: *Doth not* the Lord hereby further honour this aduancement of his seruant?

May not Princes learne hence to bee bounefull to their subiects; and insteed of pilling of them, to bestow sometimes largesse vpon them? May they not well doe it, seeing they giue them but their owne, and doe they not winne their hearts therby

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3. and can they store it vp better then there where they may require it againe. *And do they* not ease themselues of much care and feare.

Surely as it was the custome at such extraordinary kinds of ioy and feasting, to enlarge the heart in such gifts, and so shall Princes finde a great commodity herein: *the people* are contented, *and the kingdome* well fenced, *vertue is encouraged, and miserie releiued*, and *Princes herein* do most come neere vnto God, *and the people* are more faithfully knit vnto their Gouernors.

Obs. 121. Gods children ought to be liberall according to their ability and with all their power.

But marke I pray you the bountifulnesse of this King, it is said, that *he gaue gifts according to the power of the King: Not niggardly and basely*, but bountifully and according to his abilities. So ought the children of God much more to extend their liberality according to their callings, least this heathen Monarch rise vp in iudgement against them. *And therefore they are* 1. *to distribute in faith*, with warrant from the word, and looking for recompence at the hands of God, not being wearie of well dooing. 2. *They are to giue in righteousnesse*, both of that *which is their owne*, and also where it may *bee lawfull*, not to maintaine sinne, but for loue of the person, yea where it is most necessary; to those that are in greatest want: and among them especially to the *houshold of faith*. 4. Wee must respect *the end* of all our well-doing principally the saluation of the soule and glory of God: whereby wee may both condemne all Popish charitie, which generally faileth in all these circumstances, and so trie our selues whether we be truely charitable or no.

Prou. 3.

Obser. 122. Gods prouidence in vnequall matters and societies of vnlike.

Thus is the mariage of *Hester* solemnized with all the state and complement sutable thereto: thus is a Captiue Virgin aduanced to bee a royall Queene. Thus is vertue ioyned to vice to bridle the same. Thus is vice a companion of vertue, thereby to humble and so to trie the same. Thus two are in a bed, the one forsaken, the other elected: both brought together by the Lord, and by him hereby fitted to their seuerall ends. *Behold here* some resem-

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resemblance of the estate of Gods children in a visible Church, where shall they sit but they may meete with a *Judas* in their dish? if they will not conuerse with the vncleane, must they not goe out of the world? *doth not* the Lord hereby *humble* the one, and *harden* the other? *is not his prouidence* most admirable, in *accomplishing* hereby his righteous will, in them both. But of this more fitlye by Gods grace hereafter. *And thus farre concerning the aduancement of Hester:* wherein for conclusion we may note. 1. *The faithfulnesse of God*, in making good his promise. That whereas the Prophet *Ieremie* perswaded *Iechoniah* the King not to stand out against *Nabuchadnezzar*; when he came to besiedge the Citie, but to yeeld himselfe willingly to the decree of God, to goe into captiuitie: promising him there-withall, and the people (in the name of the Lord) that if they obeyed his councell, it should both go well with them in the land of their captiuitie, and after seuentie yeares they should againe returne into their countrie. *The King* obeying this councell, is honorably according to his estate respected during his life; and among the rest, this *Hester* being daughter to one of those that were in that captiuitie, is here aduanced to the most eminent dignitie, and so is a meanes for the most gratious preseruation of the Church of God. *So constant is the Lord in performing his promise:* Because *he is God and cannot* alter his loue, hee is *all sufficient*, and who can hinder his purpose: *hee is truth it selfe*, and therefore hath he said it, and it shall stand: *neither* will hee for *his glory* disappoint the expectation of his people which are his praise, his delight and glory.

1.Cor.5

*Obs.*123. The Lord faithfull in making good his word.

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Vse. 1. *Let therefore the faithfulnesse of God* condemne our distrust: *let the wicked* bee confounded, that make a mock thereat. *In the experience* of what is past, let vs bee confirmed in what is behinde; *& let this* teach vs to keepe faithfully lawfull promises to each other: *and as the Lord* is faithfull in his *promises*, so is hee also as faithfull in his *threatnings*, and therefore let vs feare him for the one, and

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loue him for the other: and giue him both the glory of his *mercy* and *his iustice*.

Thus doth the righteous Lord make good his promise: but doth he not magnifie also his power in the means thereto? Behold through many crossings and contrary blasts, is this shippe brought to the hauen: and through many desperate plunges is this poore captiue at length aduanced to greatest dignity. *So doth the Lord worke by contrary means*, that his *power* may be more manifest in making such vnlikely meanes serue him. Whereas otherwise if the means were likely, he might be thought to serue them. That carnall confidence being confounded; faith may be encreased: And the Lord may haue the onely glory of all his mercies, So Atheisme is wisely conuinced, that imputes things to chance; seeing such contrary meanes, implies extraordinary power and wisdome in the effecting of things.

2 Cor 4. 6 *Lumen e Tenebris.* *Obser.* 124. The Lord accomplisheth his will by contrary meanes.

Vse 1. Let vs not therefore *presume*, when the meanes are faire st, *neither let* vs despaire, when they are most crosse and vnlikely, And though God vse contrary meanes, because he is able to turne them to his pleasure; *Yet let vs vse* the most likely, where it is left to our choice, and not *despise* the vnlikeliest, when God imposeth the same. Because, as here the *vnlikeliest*, will best trie our faith, so there the *likeliest* do shew our obedience. 1. As being *commanded of God*, 2. and most *agreable to reason fittest for our vse*, and *most iustifiable in the issue* whether we preuaile or no. Lastly that *Hester*, by these manifold and strange afflictions, is necessarily brought to so great preferment, we may here obserue the great benefit of troubles: That they are means to worke out our greatest happinesse. *So al that wil liue Godly must suffer affliction* and by many tribulations we shall enter into the Kingdome of heauen. Because afflictions do both *purge* out our drosse, and make vs fit for *mercy*, and they are good means so *to humble vs*, *y* we may *vse happines aright*. They keepe vs from *going astray*, that so we may come to the wished hauen, and *they preserue* vs from such quicksands, as would sinke vs in our iourney.

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Obs. 125. The greatest afflictions profitable to Gods children to the obtaining of the greatest blessings. 2 Tim. 3. 12 Act. 14. Esay 1. 25 Psal. 66. 11 Psal. 11 9

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They *trie vs wisely* whether we will keepe the way or no, 5
& *proue very comfortable associates*, to preuent *Idlenesse*, and 6
wearisomnes. What should I say? though the world *account* 7
them euill, and to the *wicked the proue no lesse*? yet to Gods 8
Children, no *blessing is well seasoned without them: No blessing well obtained, but by their ministery.*

Vse 1. *And* therefore though the *world bee offended at the Crosse of Christ*, and esteeme them cursed of God, 2
that embrace the same; *Yet let vs* take vp the crosse, that Ioh. 7.
so we may obtaine the crowne. *Let vs suffer with Christ*, 2 Tim 2.
that so we may reigne with him. *Let vs looke for* troubles, 3
when we are about any good: *let vs distrust our goodnesse*, 4
if it be not seasoned with trouble: *and let this* be our com- 5
fort, that our troubles, are but short but our recompence is incomparable and shall neuer decay.

Thus *Hester* is aduanced through great tribulation; and at length findes rest in a most honorable estate.

As for her companions it is not so with them: Nay *the King himselfe* he findes no rest. And hath not *Hester* also some affliction to season her great prosperity? yea surely. *The Kings affection growes cold* and *his lust encreaseth.* Vers. 19.
And therefore it followeth that *The Virgins were gathered the second time.* To wit; for a new supplie of the Kings vnsatiable lust. *So vnreasonable* is lust, *so inconstant* carnall affection: *so lawlesse* are the wicked: *so short* is any happi- *Obs.* 126.
nesse of perfection in this life. *Thus Tyrants* cease not to The lust of the wicked vnsatiable.
molest, and spoile their subiects, that they at length may be iust spoiled.

Vse 1. *And shall* not the righteous feare euen greatest happinesse? shall *they rest* vpon it? shall they not haue 2
their loynes girt to follow hard after the marke? *Shall* 3
the wickeds torments haue an end, whose lusts are thus 4
endlesse? *shall* we not hate this flesh that is so treacherous 5
& deceitfull? *shal we* not be more watchful ouer our selues, and others, by how much our greatest happines is subiect to such foyles? such is *Mordecai*. So it is here recorded of him.

Then

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Then Mordecay ſate in the Kings gate.

That is, he attended on his office in theſe times of *Heſters aduancement*, hee doth not preſently conceiue higher matters, and ſo neglect his ordinary calling (as ſome ambitious *vpſtart* would haue done:) buſying himſelfe to creepe to preferment; hauing ſo direct a meanes to raiſe him ſpeedily: but ſoberly he attends on his office; as contented therewith: and for *ſtate matters*, he leaues them to higher powers: as for *preferment*, though the Lord had a purpoſe ſhortly to aduance him thereto, and therefore it might be thought, ſome ſpirits might bee put into him to this end, yet wiſely doth this holy man put off the thought thereof, by accuſtoming himſelfe to his *meane condition*, and yet not without regarde of his *aduanced Nephew*; whoſe aduancement growing now *iealous*, in regarde of this *new gathering of Virgins*, he is therefore ſayd further to ſit in the Kings gate, to haue intelligence thereof, and ſo to aduize and determine according. And ſurely in this example of *Mordecay* wee haue many notable points worthy our conſideration.

Obſ. 127. Markes of Gods childrē to be contented with our callings, and walke faithfully therein. 1 Cor. 7. 1.2.3.4 Pſal. 128. Math. 25.

One is that he is contented with his calling, and imployes himſelfe faithfully therein; a notable marke of the childe of God, who as he is commanded to abide in the calling wherevnto the Lord hath called him: as being *fitteſt* for him, and a *tryall of his faith*, to *exerciſe his humilitie: ſo is* he to walke faithfully therein, as whereby he doth *ſanctifie the ſame vnto him, ſhall ſee the bleſſing of God therein*, and alſo *make way thereby to a greater bleſſing*.

Vſe. 1. *Which as it condemnes* thoſe that will liue *in no calling*: ſo it alſo reproueth ſuch as make *choyſe of ſuch callings as can yeeld no contentment*, neither with any credit or comfort can we imploy our ſelues therein: *and are not they alſo* condemned hereby: ỹ hauing holy & lawfull callings, do either *baſely abuſe thē* to ỹ luſts of others, *or elſe neglect thē* vnneceſſarily to the ſatisfying of their own luſts? or els wickedly *giuing thē ouer*, or *changing thē* for others, ſurely though it be not ſimply vnlawfull to change our callings,

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if they will not *maintaine vs*, or wee bee *lawfully called to other more necessary*, for the Church or common-wealth, as being fitter. So we must looke that *necessity* and *contentment*, bee the measures of our maintenance, and that the *meanes* and *manners* of our further calling, be direct and sutable.

Callings how to be left and changed. Sect. 2. Rules how to walke conscionably in our callings.

As for our holy abiding in the calling vnto which God hath called vs, *Certainely* if wee doe but remember the *account* wee must make; and consider the *vncertaintie* when wee shall be called thereto, *if* we looke for our *reward from God*, and make a good conscience our rule to direct vs therein; *if singlenesse of heart* shall season our paines: and *casting* our care on God, be the casting of our profit; *if our buying to profit*, bee not vnprofitable to the soule; *if our striuing* for profit, be not from a desire of riches; *If prayer* be the foreman of our shop, and *thanksgiuing vnto God*, giue vp the account at night; *if Christian liberty*, keepe the cash, and *contentednesse* bee the Counter. Lastly, if our *laying out*, bee without *prodigalitie*, and our *receipts* without couetousnesse; These rules well obserued, and practised of vs; shall warrant vs safe walking in these slippery places, and be meanes to lay vp a *good foundation for vs*, against the comming of Christ Iesus.

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1. Tim. 6

A second thing to be considered in *Mordekay*, is, that hee is not hastie of preferment, nor ambitiously seekes the same: *Hee sits in the Kings gate*, hee is not fawning on *Hester*, nor proaling for greatnesse. A very true and liuely marke of the child of God: such was *Hester* (as we haue noted before): *so* was *Dauid*, *Ioseph*, and the rest: *these looke higher then the earth*, and therefore count these things as dung: *these know the danger of climing high*: and therefore they will not bee too hastie to catch a fall. In a word; as the children of God know best how to vse this abundance, so of all other they haue least need thereof; and therefore will they not bee too hastye to take this burthen vpon them, *that when it is cast vpon them*, they may be better able to beare it.

Obs. 128. Gods children not ambitious nor greedy of preferment.

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2 *Vse.* 1. Which being so, *let hasty* climers see what right they haue in heauen; *let them wisely* consider how they cast off all care of vertue, when once they begin to ride poste
3 to preferment. As for Gods children *let it suffice them*, that
4 they can clime no higher; *and seeing* they are hastning to the citie which is aboue, *let them wisely* decline such mountaines as may require some dangerous worship at their
5 hands, *and rather* desire to haue their life hid with Christ in God, so may they more freely imploy themselues in the things which are aboue, which in the flesh is kept low; &
6 the pride thereof abased. *And if they will be safely ambitious indeed*, let them striue to *exceede in grace*, and goe formost to heauen: here the more hast the better speed, *and the sooner sped the lesser misery, the longer happinesse.*

But why doth the *holy Ghost* here make such precise mention of *Mordecayes* sitting at the gate? no doubt though he attended his office, hee forgat not his daughter now being aduanced; and as a tender father, hath an eare after her; he sits in the gate to hearken after her estate, and to aduize as he should be called. So carefull ought fathers to bee for the good of their children. So is our heauenly Father carefull and continually prouident ouer vs. But of this point heretofore. As also of the next verse, concerning the concealing of *Hesters* nation and kindred, according as *Mordecay* had formerly aduized; onely let vs adde for the iustifying of this practise *of Hester* thus much: that though she lawfully conceales her country and nation to preuent danger, yet is she no warrant to Popish dissembling and damnable equiuocating: for shee conceales being not *demanded*; they beeing demanded corrupt the truth, by reseruing truth in the minde, and vttering a lye with the mouth: *Shee* conceales for the *safety of her selfe, and the Church of God*, they keepe themselues close *to destroy the Church of God. She is commanded by her Vnckle*, who hath lawfull power thereto: they take warrant from that man of sinne, who hath none to giue. Thus is *Hester* no warrant for Popish equiuocating, much lesse will

Obs. 129. Aequiuocatiõ damnable.
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will equiuocating warrant & maintaine Popery. *The Lord will confound the lyar and the deceitfull man.*

And seeing that Hester now beeing so honorably married, doth yet so respect the aduice of her Vnckle, this may teach vs, *That as honour doth not quench loue in the Saints of God: so mariage also doth not take away obedience to Parents.* *Obs.* 130. Honor doth not quench loue in Gods children.

And surely how should honour quench loue in them, who the more pledges they haue of Gods loue, the more are they prouoked to loue one another, by how much they haue now better meanes to show their loue: can the fire goe out when more wood is cast on? *and can* there be a greater honor to honor, then to be kinde and affable to inferiors? *and how* shall honour bee maintained without true loue? and if wee loue not may wee hope to bee beloued? 2 3

Vse. 1. *What comfort* then can such haue of their greatnesse and honors, that place the glory thereof in despising inferiors, and giuing them all occasions of hatred against them? *what hope of continuance* where loue is not setled? Let Politicians looke to this, and see well to their standing. Surely *feare is but a sorry keeper of honor*, and *iealousie* will hardly procure continuance thereto: *let them hate me, so they feare mee*, is the voyce of *tyrany*: and if they hate, they will plotte destruction: this is the iustice of God. But of this point heretofore. Now. 2

Concerning the obedience that this gratious Queene performes to her father, beeing maried away from him: this also teacheth vs: *that children are bound to obey their parents, and performe dutie vnto them*, though they be married from them, and so bee vnder an other gouernment. And the reason is, *because one of these gouernments is subordinate to the other. & may* both agree without impeachmēt to each other: *yea obedience* to either in their places, is that wherby they both are happily maintained: *& surely*, if cōsent of parents be most necessary to mariage, ought there not to be a respect still to parents, euen when this blessing *Obs.* 131. Mariage takes not away obedience from parents. 1 2 3 4

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is enioyed, Thus did the *Patriarches* obey their Fathers, and *the commandement of obedience to parents being morall*, and perpetuall, doth it not bind vs all our life long?

Obs. 132. Mariage a neerer bond then that of nature.

Indeed, as the bond of mariage is neerer then that of nature; *because it both* renewes the bond of nature, *and aduanceth* also nature to an honorable estate: *yea resembleth* the most neere coniunction betweene *Christ and his Church*: so ought we rather to keepe this bond, then the bond of nature: if such occasion should bee offered which should be preferred: not that herein we breake the bond of nature, but wisely establish it, in subordinating the same to a more high and neerer bond. So is our Sauiour to be vnderstood, when he saith: *For this cause shall a man leaue Father and Mother and cleaue to his wife*: meaning thereby, *that mariage is a neerer bond, then that of nature: therefore of the two, rather cleaue to thy wife, if occasion should be offered whether should be forsaken.* The resolution hereof stands in the *consideration of such duties*, as doe belong to these seuerall callings. Whereof some are *common to both*, others are *peculiar to either*. Those which are common to both are either *simply common to both*, or *respectiuely and comparatiuely*. Those which are simply *and generally* common to both callings, are 1. *Reuerence*, 2. Loue, and 3. Naturall affection &c. generally such as simply respect their *persons*, as *they beare the Image of God, and resemble his authoritie ouer vs.* Those which are *common to both* with respect & prolation, are *Obedience, Maintenance, &c.* which though we owe to both, yet are wee to performe them in their order. *Obedience* first to the husband before the Father, maintenance to the wife before the parents, yet herein also being *lead by the chiefest bond.* Namely to doe *good especially to the houshold of faith*: and wisely discerning the *inuincibleneſſe of neceſſitie*: not standing on *what want may bee*, neither *what superfluously we thinke fitte*: but so depending on the prouidence of God: as not to neglect present reliefe, and therein to bee led by the neerer bond.

Math. 19.

Galat. 6. 10

As for such duties as are proper to either: such as are due

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due benevolence, cohabitation, in the ſtate of marriage: theſe not concerning parents, may well be performed without impeachment to their honour. As likewiſe ſuch dueties as are not proper betweene the Father and the Sonne, may very well ſtand with the performance of ſuch as concerne the State of marriage: ſo that they all tend to the *glorie of God*, and principally intend *the ſaluation* of the *ſoule*.

Vſe 1. Which as it condemneth thoſe Parents that hauing aduanced their Children to this honorable Eſtate of marriage, do either *baſely crouch vnto*, or by too *much indulgence* looſe the right in their Childrens ſubiection: *So doth it conuince* their extreame folly, which is the cauſe thereof; Namely, their parting with too great portions, or putting ouer their eſtates vnto them: By which, it comes to paſſe, that their Children being puft vp, and hauing the ſword put into their hands, in ſteed of obedience to Parentes, do many times beate them with their owne rodde. And ſo by Gods iudgement prouoking hereby their Parents in the bitterneſſe of their ſoules, to curſing and complayning: *the Lord heares their crie*, and puniſheth ſuch rebellious plants, by rooting them out, and laying waſt their habitations. 2

And therefore alſo ſuch *children may here learne their leſſon*. As not ſo much to ſtand vpon portion, or ſuch outward complement for their preferment: ſo *to performe conſcionable* obedience, while they are at home, ſo ſhall they not forget it when they are abroad. 3

And married folkes alſo, may here take out their leſſon, *not to deſpiſe their* aged Parents but rather now to performe them *double honour*, becauſe they were not onely the cauſe of their being, but in placing them thus comfortably, a good meanes of their well being. 4

Vſe 2. *You* that are left of your Parents, to take their chance (as we ſay) and to get it out of the fire; theſe haue moſt cauſe to honour their Parents, becauſe as

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they can more sufficiently requite them in that they were meanes of their being: So being now put to a more iust triall of the sincerity of their obedience, and being certainely perswaded; that as what was wanting in Parents hath beene supplied by the Lord: so his hand shall not be shortned if they enlarge theirs; euen where they haue no other cause but only for Gods sake; when they can hope for no better pay-maister then God himselfe.

And thus farre concerning Hesters *obedience.*

But what? are all of *Hesters* minde to performe obedience to their superiors? doth *Ahashuerosh* finde as faithfull subiects as *Mordecai* found faithfulnesse in his aduanced Nephew? Surely no; Behold *Hester* so highly preferred yet performes dutie to her Father, and yet *Ahashuerosh* being chiefe Commander, cannot finde loyaltie in his subiects: but while he is wallowing in the fulnesse of his pleasures and blessing his soule in his security and false content, his life is sought for by two of his attendants, euen those that he appointed keepers of the doore, or of the entry, for his greater safety: so it followeth.

Vers. 21. 22. *In those daies when* Mordecai *sate in the Kings gate, two of the Kings Eunuches* Bigthan, *and* Teresh, *which kept the doore were wroth, and sought to lay hands on the King* Ahashueroſh *&c.*

In which words the spirit of Gods sets downe a very feareful and yet vsual accident vnto Tyrants: befalling this voluptious Prince in the glut of his pleasures to *sauce* the same, & so to make him *more without excuse*: namely *a desperate treason* entended by two of his seruants, whom he put in some trust, tending to no lesse, then the taking away of his life. *Wherein we may obserue these circumstances.*

1. The time when this Treason was committed: *In those daies*: in those daies of pleasure and security, of rauishing and deflowring of Virgins, of enioying delight with the wronging and oppression of others: then is this

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luxurious Prince ſummoned to his account, then is his life ſought for; then is he moſt in danger.

2. The perſon is deſcribed by whom the Treaſon is diſcouered, and the daunger preuented: who is *Mordecai* the ſeruant of GOD: he prooues the faithfull ſeruant to his Prince, he that is moſt deſpiſed, yet does moſt good.

Now *Mordecai* is here deſcribed. 1. by his faithfull attending on his office: *he ſate in the Kings gate.* 2. by his intelligence of the Treaſon. *The thing was knowne to* Mordecai. 3. by his wiſdome in the diſcouery of it. *He told it vnto the Queene* Heſter *and* Heſter *certified the King thereof in* Mordecaies *name.*

3. The parties are ſet downe by whom this treaſon is committed, and that. 1. by *their number*, they were *two*, Secondly *by their quality*, they were Eunuches. 3. *by their names*, they were called *Bigthan & Teresh.* 4. *by their office*, they *kept the doore.* 5. *by the occaſion* mouing them thereto, they were *(wroth.)*

4. The Treaſon it ſelfe is layd open. Namely *to lay hands on the King* Ahaſhueroſh to take away his life.

5. The perſon is deſcribed againſt whom the Treaſon is committed, namely *King Ahaſhueroſh.*

6. Here is ſet downe the diſcouery of the Treaſon, and that both by the Author as before, and manner of the diſcouery, namely *inquiſition was made and it was found to bee ſo.*

7. Here is commended vnto vs the execution of theſe Traitors. *They were both hanged on a tree.*

8. The holy Ghoſt concludes this hiſtory with a notable relation of wiſdome euen of thoſe Godleſſe men, namely *it was written in the booke of Chronicles before the King*, that ſo memorable a deliuerance might neuer be forgotten, and the ſeruice of *Mordecai* might hereafter be remembred.

Theſe are the particulars in this memorable accident. And 1. *concerning the Time* when it fell out.

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In those daies] That is when the King is drowning himselfe in pleasure, and saith, soule take thy ease : Then doth the Lord raise some of his owne house to call him to an account, and to strippe him in a moment of all his vaine confidence. *So slippery places* are great ones placed in : *so doth the Lord* seuere their prosperity with suddaine and vnexpected dangers, to confound their carnall confidence therein; *and thereby* to make their dotage much more inexcusable, that will build their house vpon the sands, which euery blast will ouerturne.

Psa. 73

Obs. 133. The prosperity of the wicked slippery and subiect to great daungers.

Math. 7

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1. *Whence we may learne*, *not* to giue the bridle to prosperity, *neither* to set our hearts vpon it : *neither* to enuie it in others, nor to be greedy of it our selues : but *to feare in our selues*, and *seeke to establish* it in our superiors, by *praier* to God for them, and *watchfulnesse* in our callings. So doth *Mardecai, he sate in the Kings gate*: he was watchfull in his calling and so the Lord honoreth him to be a meanes of the *preseruation of his Prince*, and *liberty of his Church*.

Obser. 134. God recompenceth the diligence and honest care of his children with good successe.

So acceptable are the labours of Gods Children in his eyes : *so doth* he win them in this life, to encourage vs in well doing : and to *seale vp vnto vs* our eternall reward in the life to come.

Malach 3. 2 3

1. *Shall we then say* it is in vaine to serue God, what profit shall we haue if we pray vnto him? *No let vs* resolue that the Lord is faithfull, that he will not forget our labour, be it neuer so meane, *and if we will trie God* further, we shall see greater things then these : Concerning faithfulnesse in walking in our callings we haue spoken heretofore.

Obs. 135. God recompenceth our loue to others aboundantly in our selues. Pro. 11. 17

One thing we may here further obserue from the end of *Mordecies* sitting at the Kings gate, which was to hearken how it fared with *Hester* : how it went with those that feared God: *That he which was carefull* for the good of others, especially of such as were of the houshold of faith, hath this fruit of this his loue redounding plentifully vpon himselfe, *hee is mercifull to his owne soule*; the LORD by this meanes offering this occasion for his owne

owne good and aduancement: *so gracious* is the Lord to recompence the loue of his seruants, *so thankefull is* loue to come but of our debt; *so doth* the Lord prouoke vs hereby to mutuall loue, *so doth he fit vs* to perfection and glory. 3 Col. 14

Vse 1. And therefore, as he which will not be his brothers keeper, shall not keepe himselfe: *so let vs* in the name of God shew mercy to our selues, in being mercifull to others: *there is that scattereth and hath plenty*, and *though we* Pro. 11 *cast our bread vpon the waters, yet after many daies wee shall* Eccle. 11.1 *finde it againe.* 2 *Obs.* 136.

But wherein is it, that the Lord blesseth *Mordecai*? he is better vnto him, then he did desire: his desire only was that *Hester* might be safe, and loe the Lord vseth him as a meanes for the safety of the King too; yea this is turned about by the Lord as a meanes of his owne further good. *So bountifull* is the Lord to giue vs more then we desire: *so when we seeke the principall*, doth he cast vpon vs other blessings also. Surely Gods children in seeking the best blessings obtaine all the rest. Math. 6. 33

Vse 1. Let not then the wicked bragge that they haue more then their heartes desire: surely though they haue their desire, yet God sends leanenesse into their soules: but the Lord will fulfill the desires of them that feare him, yea if they aske wisdome, he will giue them both wisdome, and ritches. *Oh* that we were wise to choose aright! that we would first seeke the best, that so we may haue all, *and no mervayle if the* wicked loose all that loose the best. Psa. 73 Psal. 106. 15 Psal. 145 1 Reg. 3. 2 Luk. 10. 42 3

Well thus you see Mordecai, is the happie man, that deliuers the Kingdome: the righteous onely are they that safegard Princes: they are the only faithful subiects: they onely stand in the gappe to keepe out Gods wrath: they onely hold GOD and his blessings to a sinfull nation: none can be truly loyall but onely such. *For they obey for conscience* and not by constraint: *they are led by loue* and not by feare: *they onelie haue hope of the reward*, and therefore can beare the burthen with patience, *Obs.* 137. Gods children the onely faithfull subiects. Eccle. 22 Ecc. 8. 9 Moyses. Exod. 32

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they onely feare GOD and therefore can truely reuerence men.

Vse 1. Behold here then the cause of the desolation of Kingdomes: Namely the want of those that feare the
2 Lord: *See the* policie of Satan in setting the world most against these that so the wicked may be the contriuers of there owne destruction. *How vaine are* Papists to boast
3 of obedience: seeing as their profession bewrayeth, that they feare not GOD: so their practizes do daylie discouer, that they will not obey men: *How foolish is policie,*
4 to suggest Religion, to bee an enemie to States; and that these which best serue GOD, are least seruiceable to men.

Surely let Princes secure themselues in the safety of
5 Gods Children: *And let* Ezechiel be a signe vnto those
6 that haue their eyes in their heads. *As for Gods Children*
Eccle. 12 *let them* comfort themselues, though *Amos* must not
7 come at *Bethel*: when all is peace, yet *Iehoram*, shall seeke
7. Amos. 2. Reg. 3. 13 to *Elisha*, when the Lord beginnes to roote. *And happy is*
8 *that* Kingdome where such *Elishaes* are. *Yea more happie*
9 *Sunamite* that will stay the Prophet with her. Howsoeuer it is wisdome is iustified of her Children, nay as you heard before, she shalbe iustified of her enemies. But how comes *Mordecai* to vnderstand the treason?

Obs. 138. Gods children skilfull in discouering of secrets.

Surely the Lord will not hide from his Children what may concerne their good: *their apprehensions* are deepe, *and obseruations* to purpose, *their knowledge is extraordinary* to boult out mischiefes, *their experience* leads them to geesse shrewedly at mens purposes, by their gestures and countenance: their *wisdome enableth them* by questions and conference to sound the mindes of men. Howsoeuer it is. The *thing was knowne to* Mordecai. *So happie* are Gods Children by this meanes to secure others: *so doth God trie* the wisdome of his Children by the iustice of such dangerous secrets, for the better approuing and securing of themselues.

So did our gracious King admirably finde out the treason.

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treason wrapped vp very closely in a most vnlikely frame of words, and from a foolish sence gathered a desperate practize.

Vse 1. Which though it doth not warrant presumption of extraordinary reuelations, *nor such superstitious conceipts* in Popery for the intelligence of hidden matters, *much-lesse* doth approue those deuilish acts which make so many deceiuers, and false Prophets in the world. *Yet it* doth iustifie that priueledge, that doth onely belong vnto the Saints. Namely, *that the spirituall man discerneth all things:* not onely concerning matters of saluation, but euen so far also concerning this life, as Godlinesse is profitable aswell for this as for that other. *And* therefore as Princes may learne hence who to imploy in secrets; *So* may Christians generally learne this lesson. Namely in doubtful cases and extremities, to seeke to such *interpreters*, who can declare to man his righteousnes, & discouer his dangers, that so he may auoide the one and embrace the other.

2 3 4 1 Cor. 2. Amos 3. 5 6 Ieh. 33.

Well it pleaseth the Lord to giue his seruant *Mordecai* notice of the treason: how doth he now behaue himselfe in ỹ discouery of this secret? *Conceale it he must not*, lest he incur the penalty of the law, *the safety of the Prince* requires no lesse: *and the good of the offendors* enioynes the same, that the body being punished the soule may bee saued: *and the common wealth also* shall gaine hereby as being much secured in the detection of such great mischiefes.

Obs. 139. Treason not to be concealed.

Which as it iustifeth the equity of our law, which makes concealers of Treason, parties therein: *So* it discouers the notable deepenesse of Satan in carying these mischiefes so closely that they may not be discouered. *And* hereby also subiects may wisely learne, as to make conscience of their company least they heare what they would not, so to take heed, what *they heare*, and much more what they conceale, assuring themselues, that as their is a time to couer the infirmities of their brethren, from God and men, so their is also a time to discouer their sin, when the *publique good* requires it, and their *priuate* also will sort therewith.

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Treason then must be discouered: but yet *warily* too: I must haue a good ground for what I report; lest I be found to accuse an innocent: and I must be able to vphold the discouery with some countenance and reputation, least I be borne downe in the truth by the greatnesse of the offendor

Behold here then the wisdome of Mordecai. He relates not the matter himselfe to the King, least he might not be beleeued, or be out-faced by the countenance of the Traytors: and the King might be enraged, or deiected hereby: and so for this ill newes might giue him but sorry recompence. But wisely he goes to the Queene, with whom he was of more credit, and might more boldly reueale the matter vnto her; whome he knew to be gratious with her Lord, or els by this demonstration of faithfulnesse might renew her fauour againe. Wherein we may obserue a manifold argument of *Mordecaies* wisdome.

Obs. 140. Treason to be reuealed in wisdome.

Particulars of *Mordecaies* wisdome herein.

1. *He takes occasion hereby* to haue accesse to *Hester*: and so in wise sort to renue his ancient acquaintance with her. Wheras otherwise if he had had no other errant, his comming might either haue smelt of malepartnesse, or of proud ambition.

2. *He procures hereby* credit to the Narration when it shalbe promoted, by so honorable and acceptable a personage.

3. *In this his wisdome* he renewes also his loue to his beloued daughter, he enuies not her aduancement, and therefore will reueale the treason himselfe to take away the thankes from her; but knowing that fauour was mutable and greatnesse iealous; therefore he makes *Hester* the meanes to acquaint the King therewith: both, *that* she might take occasion hereby, to performe her duetie to the King: and also might by this meanes renue his affections towards her. *Yea* Mordecai might safely haue also a further reach herein; namely to trie the sincere affection of his daughter towards him, whether she would make this an occasion to his good and preferment, or rather

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rather take the glory thereof vnto her-selfe.

Vse. 1. *Whereby we are taught*, as rather then to conceale treason to reueale it our selues; yet if we may to vse such for the acquainting of the Prince therewith, as may procure more credit to the truth and lesse daunger to our selues: *Let not hope* of reward here make vs to hasty, least the wrath of a King being the messenger of death, it light vpon those that are neerest thereto: Oh how gratious is a word in due season? how doth the author grace the narration: *whereby we may further learne*, to get true fauour to our persons, by being gratious with GOD, and so shall we happily preuaile with men. *And yet*, are not to neglect the meanes of such as are in fauour with men: so we vse modesty, and sincerity therein: *Let vs especially* be carefull, not to abuse them with rumours and falce-hoodes: though Princes for a time are delighted with these; yet falce-hood will out and fauour will change: and so bring shame vpon the suggestors, and reporters both.

Thus Hester *is also acquainted with this mischiefe* entended against her LORD. What doth she now? doth she conceale it as being sicke of her Husband? *discontent* might haue ministred cause, and *reuenge* would haue furthered the mischiefe. The *incontinency* of the King must needs breede *iealosie*, and *iealosie* is the rage of a man, therefore *he will not spare in the day of vengeance*; some would haue *tickled*, at this occasion, to haue bene rid of a bad husband, And *lust* here would haue promoted the matter, by suggesting hope of change, *yea ambition* too (by your leaue) would haue puft vp some such *Semiramis*, that so she might raigne alone. *But gratious* Hester hath none of this fuell; religion hath taught her to passe by wrongs, and to ouer-come euill with good: and therefore no doubt she is glad by this occasion to approue herselfe vnto her Lord; and thereby also to put him in mind of the vncertainty of his estate, and so to tender meanes of his reclayming and amendment. *So ought a gratious wife to respect* Rom. 12.

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Obser. 141. A good wife ought to watch ouer her husband & to informe him of such daungers as are intented against him.

the well-fare of her husband, and so *did Abigail* aduize her husband *Nabal*. So must they reueale vnto their husbands what they know concerning there estates as knowing that they *are one*, and therefore both there good or euill doth go togeather, and that especially hereby, *they keepe themselues in Gods fauour*, and thefore though the husband should take it ill, yet here is the comfort, the Lord commaunds it, and he will turne the heart of the husband, as shall be best for both.

Which as it condemneth those murtherous wiues that do desperatly seeke the life of their husbands either by direct engines, as *poyson*, strangling. &c. or by indirect meanes, as by faulse *accusations*, *vnreasonable braulings. &c. so it doth also condemne those*, that flatter them in their sinne, and sooth them vp in their wickednesse, and for feare of displeasure dare not louingly reproue and admonish them therof. *And here also* may wiues learne for there instruction, to discharge their duties vnto their husbands in giuing them notice of such daungers, as they are subiect vnto, leauing the succesle to God, who will reward there faithfulnesse.

Ziba.

Thus Hester *discouers the Treason* vnto the King, But doth she enuiously conceale the first author and so take the credit to her selfe? *no it is said she certefies the King thereof in* Mordecais *name*, i. she signifies vnto the King that *Mordecai* was the first discouerer; that so the Prince might take notice of his faithfulnesse, and God might vse this as a meanes for the aduancement of his seruant, in conuenient time.

Obs. 142. Gods children ought to approue and promote each other in their weldoing.

Thus ought the Saints of God to right each others: in acknowledging there good parts, yea in promoting the same: especially they that are already promoted least they should appeare to doubt of the worth of their preferment, which being communicated, if it be good is thereby much bettered and encreased, which is herein *secured* that it hath more supporters: yea is the more *honored*, in doing honour to others.

Vse. 1. Where

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Vse. 1. *Where is then their religion* that detract from each other, where is their *loue*, that thinke they do God good seruice *in false accusations*, *and wrong* surmises, *how farre* are these from ascribing vnto the Saints what is there due which take that from them which they cannot giue them? *Oh what* folly is that policy which seekes to aduance it selfe by depriuing of others, *what* trechery that loue which will ascribe to others what is none of theirs; crying peace peace while it serues there owne turne, but if a man put not in their mouthes they prepare warre against him, Mich. 2. 6 *Oh what shall beecome of them* that iustifie the wicked for a reward, and take away the righteousnesse of Esay 5. the righteous from him? The seruant of Christ Iesus is taught here an other lesson: Namely not to slaunder Psal. 15. his neighbour, nor falsely to accuse him, *but as he acknowledges GOD*, so to giue testimony to his gifts, that the good may be encouraged, and GOD may bee glorified.

Lastly in that treasons, and most secret wickednesse, are thus detected and met withall, this doth notably iustifie *the diuine prouidence* in ouerruling such euils, and iudging the same, and *magnifieth also Gods wisdome*, in confounding the *policy* of the wicked, who by their secrecy in euill, promise to themselues good successe therein, whereby growing *confident*, and *insolent* against the Lord, who say they shall see them? who can preuent them? they are iustly met withall in their security either *their owne*, *wonges* shall fall vpon them or *the foules of Heauen*, shall reueale the mischiefe, *or the wisdome of the Saints* shall discouer the same. All which did most notably appeare in the discouery of the *Poulder treason*, and so doth exceedingly magnifie the truth of Gods prouidence therein. *Obs.* 143. Gods prouidence and wisdome most eminent in the discouery of treasons. Iesuits in the poulder treason.

Vs. 1. *Which as it iustifieth* the truth of the word, that *ther is nothing so secret*, *which shall not be manifested: so it is a notable lesson* to all *clookers* of sinne, not to trust to such *clokes of shame* for the hiding of sinne, but rather to consider,

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Pro.28. consider, *that as he that hideth his sinne shall not prosper* in this life, by reason of the *hell of conscience* attending the
Num.33. same, or else, in that the Lord will finde him out therein by some temporall iudgement: *so shall he for all these things,*
Eccl.11. *come to iudgement*, and then the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest, that euery one may receiue, according to his worke: *And* when the slieft *treasons*, & horible murthers shall be wunderfully discouered, tremble thou *Atheist* at the
Psa.14. prouidence of God, and though thou saiest but in thy heart, *that there is* no GOD, yet remember, that this thought of thy heart, shall one day be discouered, yea the actions of thy life shall cast the dart of thine Atheisme in thy face, and reioyce not, O thou enemy in thy ma-
Letter to the L. Mounteagle lice against the Saintst, boast not, that thou wilt do them mischiefe, *and they shall not know who hurt them*: behold, the Lord is their keeper, and *he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye*, and canst thou come so neare God, and hope not to be met withall? *Let this lesson all* sorts, to haue the Lord alwaies before them, so shall they either bee kept from running into sinne, or if they fall, by the gratious presence of the LORD be raysed vp againe.

Thus haue we heard, of the *meanes* and manner that God vseth for the discouery of this treason. Now let vs a little further consider the *treason it selfe*: And 1. *Obserue we the authors of it.*

Obser. 144. It is said they were *two of the Kings Eunuches.*

Traitors vse to band themselues together for the accomplishment of their mischiefe. Behold how sinne delights in company: especially *treason* will not be alone; *the fact is horrible*, and therefore company must needs be had to appease and to embolden to the mischiefe trembling conscience, *The attempt is desperate*, and therefore many hands must ioyne therein; that where one misseth the other may hit, *And the Lord herein hath an ouerruling hand*: that where one could keepe counsell, by company it shall be reuealed, for that carnall wisdome might proue it owne confusion; do bretheren in euill further each others punishment? so was

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the multitude of conſpirators in the Poulder treaſon a ſpeciall occaſion of the diſcouery thereof, *Let ſinners learne heare* to take heede of *ỹ multitude, let them* not hope by company in ſinne to carry it more *cloſely*. or accompliſh it *more deſperately; nay let them feare* whatſoeuer may ſtrengthen and countenance ſinne, becauſe as *repentance* is hereby hindred, and *ſecurity* encreaſed, ſo vengeaunce is iuſtly haſtened by the ſame. *Surely as* fellowſhippe in euill is a note of ſinnes wiſdome and confuſion: ſo not to communicate of each others goodneſſe, is a marke of *it vnſoundneſſe*: And therefore let not goodneſſe dwell alone either in *ſingularity* or *weakeneſſe*, let it not *feare infection*, nor *couer it worthyneſſe*, *but let thoſe that are conuerted*, conuert their bretheren, and let not the fellowſhip of the Saints at any hand be forſaken: but let vs ſupport one another by loue, that grace may be the ſtronger: and *let vs take vnto vs him that is weake*, *leaſt we alſo be tempted*, labouring to keepe the vnity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace, that ſo we may grow vp together, As heyres of the bleſſing.

Conference betweene Hall and Garnet in the Tower. 1 2 3

Luk.23.32. Heb.10.23. Gal.6.1. Eph.4.

Thus we ſee the number of theſe Traytors. Now let vs a little farther conſider *of their condition*; it is here ſaid, *they were*

Eunuches, that is, they were ſome honorable perſonages attending on the prince, not gelded perſons as their name may ſeeme to imply: but becauſe Eunuches, did ſometime attend in ſuch places, therefore it came to paſſe, that all which were of any honorable imployment about the Prince (whether they were gelded or no) were called Eunuches.

Obſe. 16. Great ones vſually actors in treaſons, and why.

By which it appeareth, what condition of men are vſually actors in treaſons; *namely*, not baſe & inferiour perſons, whoſe ſpirits are deiected, and hopes lie groueling on the ground: But men of *ſort and quality*, *ſuch* as haue *aſpiring ſpirits*, and therefore will be leaueling at the higheſt, and what more ready then treaſon, to ſerue their ambition? *ſuch* (I ſay) as by reaſon of their credit and acceſſe haue *beſt opportunity*,

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3 *oportunity* to committe ſuch hidden miſchiefes: Yea *ſuch* as go not without *their diſgraces* and *ſnubbes* from iealous and licentious Princes, and therefore are prouoked to be
4 auenged of them. *And* (which is the moſt materiall of all) *Such* as haue beene imployed by wicked Princes, in treacherous and vile oppreſſions of the ſubiect; and therefore by the iuſtice of God, do many times practiſe their leſſon vpon their *teachers*, and *ſuch* as by reaſon of natures gifts
5 and the abuſe thereof are giuen vp to commit all ſinne, euen with greedineſſe; and therefore no maruaile, if they
6 will make no bones of this ſinne, *by which* they may hope to haue a protection for all the reſt: And yet are heerein met withall, by the diuine iuſtice, who many times turnes this ſinne to be *pay-maiſter* for all the reſt; as bringing to ſhame and confuſion the Authors thereof.

Vſe 1. *Which as it condemneth thoſe*, that determine of ſinne by the condition of the perſon, implying that onely baſe and ignoble mungrells doe conceiue ſuch monſtrous ſinnes, as for *generous mindes and heroicall* ſpirits it comes not once into their thoughts to commit ſuch outrage: whereas we ſee *the ſchoole of Rome* hath ſet downe this as a marke of the moſt *heroicall ſpirit*, to riſe vp againſt the Prince; and experience hath made it too apparant in the *ponlder Treaſon*: howſoeuer Popery would haue *daubed*
2 *the matter*: *So* here generally the beſt *priuiledges of nature are condemned*: as beeing the moſt deſperate inſtruments of ſinne, if they be not ſanctified by grace. *And therefore*
3 *here men of reputation* may wiſely learne their leſſon, to *ſeaſon* their gifts with good *education* and *religion*: that ſo they may be kept within the bondes of obedience to God
4 and man. *And Princes* alſo may learne here their leſſon; as not to *abuſe their attendants*, to the hurt of others: ſo
5 not to giue them iuſt cauſe of diſcontent: *Yea all fleſh may*
Micah. 7. *here learne it leſſon*: not to truſt in *a friend; not to put confidence in a Councellor*. No not to truſt the *wife that lies in the boſome*, otherwiſe then to ſubordinate all to God: and for his ſake to renounce them all: ſo ſhal they be faithfull

vnto

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vnto vs, so farre as shall make for our good, and though they bee vnfaithfull, yet *the infidelity of men shal not make the faith of God of none effect.*

But let vs consider a little further of the name and office of these Eunuches. For their *Names*, they are called *Bigthan* & *Tereſh*: by which it seemes that one of them, namely *Bigthan* was sent with others, when the King was in his cuppes, to conuay *Vashty* the Queene to the presence of the King. And beholde hee is now one of them that cal the King to an account for that his notorious wrong done vnto the Queene. *So iust* is the Lord to *make instruments of sinne, weapons to punish the same*: to the magnifying of his *prouidence* and *reformation* of ỹ same, or else to make him *more without excuse*, to his greater confusion: but of this heretofore.

Obs. 147. God makes instruments of sin rods to punish the same.

The *Office* that the *holy Ghost* ascribes to these Eunuchs, though their name do imply it to be diuers, yet both concurre in this, that it was an *Office* of some trust: and thence we may learne not vnprofitably, that *Treason is in trust*. Those that are most in place of trust, they proue many times the greatest traytors. beause these, being *Princes creatures* (as they call them) new molded to their bent, the more confidence is hereby put in them, the lesse suspition there is of them. Wher-vpon it commeth to passe, ỹ *security* is bred in the Prince, & God he is *robd of his honour*: the subiect he is *puft vp*, and so prouoked to mischiefe: the Lord he auengeth his glory in giuing him vp to his lusts, & the securitie of his maister, cries aime therto.

Obs. 148. In greatest trust greatest Treason.

Which as it condemneth that complaint of flesh & blood, 1
that they are deceiued in those whom they put most in trust, becaufe them-selues are the cauſe thereof: *so it doth* 2
not excuse such as are put in trust, becauſe their *sinne is the greater*, by how much the more they were the better thought off.

And yet Princes, also are not to be excused neither, 3
because it is much in them to preuent this mischiefe. And therfore seeing there must be some, whom necessarily they must

Princes to preuent treachery.

must truſt: That they may not be deceiued by them: *Let them make God their confidence*, by keeping them-ſelues in the bounds of his prouidence: as walking *faithfully in their callings*, and ſo bring *good examples* to their ſubiects, not being cauſelesly *iealous* of them, *nor* eſtranging our ſelues from them: *But* vſing them ſo, that they may rather ſee they haue need of them, then that Princes haue indeed other need of their people, then what may as well concerne their good: tempering their loue with Maieſtie, and their indignation with clemency. And though they ought to deſpiſe none, yet not raſhly *admitting* each one into their *ſeruice* before they haue good approbation of his zeale and loyalty, and therein alſo to make ſome tryal before they truſt, eſpecially concerning their perſon or the good of their Kingdome: And when they truſt, yet to *keepe ſuch ſecrets to them-ſelues*, as are not *fit for them to know*, nor *ſafe* for Princes *to reueale* (I meane) theſe *Miſteries of gouernment*, which *extraordinarily*, God reueales vnto them. And when they haue truſted, *yet not further to rely thereon*, Then conſidering they now *ſaile (as it were) in another bottome*, ſuch as at leaſt is apt to leake, they be ſo far from *remitting of their care, or yeelding to ſecurity* (as the manner is) as that now rather they ought to haue a more vigilant eye vnto the maine, and in all humility to caſt their care vpon God. As knowing that the right end of the ſubiects imployment by the Prince in matter of truſt, is not *to take away the care of the Prince*, as if then there were no need, but rather *to ſettle it more conſtantly on God*: becauſe as it will be *imputed* vnto the Prince for *iealouſie*, if hee will not truſt his ſubiect: and therefore he muſt needs put ſome in truſt leaſt hee diſcouer a feare of his owne eſtate, which doth proceed from bad deſert: So wil it imply further a diſtruſt there, where there is no apparant cauſe, and ſo happily prouoke to giue iuſt cauſe of diſtruſt.

And therfore ſeeing thoſe whom he muſt vſe, he muſt alſo truſt, & yet in truſting of them, *both giue them occaſion*

to

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to thinke the Prince hath need of them, as alſo, *that they are well conceiued and approued off*: leaſt heereby ſuch might either *grow to worke vpon their Princes ſecrets*, to keep the ſtate in awe, and thereby *to get the head*: Very neceſſary it is, that as Princes be *wiſe, what they commit in truſt*, ſo they be not *ſecure* in the *iſſue of it*: but rather watch dilligently ouer the truſt committed, and to keepe the bridle in their owne handes, *by putting it wiſely to God*. Whereby it ſhall come to paſſe: that the ſubiect hereby perceiuing that he is rather *honoured in the caſe committed*, then the *Prince diſburthened of the care of his* calling, will more faithfully behaue him-ſelfe to giue ſound contentment: And ſo the Prince beeing more *ſecured by the loyalty of his ſubiect*, will bee more ſtill prouoked *to reſt vpon God*: In *whoſe hands ſeeing the hearts of all men are*; therefore hee cannot better ſecure the iſſue of his affaires, then by reſigning the ſame into the gratious hand of God.

Obſe. 146. Anger incident to Courtiers.

Thus wee ſee who they are that intend this miſchiefe againſt ỳ King. *But what might the cauſe be that moued them thereto?*

It followeth: they *Were wroth*; ſome-what had diſpleaſed them: either they were not *preferred* according to their deſarts and expectation, *or they wanted their ſtipend*, according to their places, *or they were offended* for the diuorcement of *Vaſhty*; *or they were* ſo full fedde, they muſt needs bee kicking. *So apt* are ſuch ſtallions to fume and champe the bridle: *So truly* is anger the complement of Courtiers: as whereby they *ſhow their ſpirits* and *vphold their credits*; whereby they *obtaine their deſires* and *put of their dangers*: Whereby *they dare their enemies*, and *hold their friends*. By it they *iuſtifie their wrongs, and pay their debts*. *Which as it is* no warrant for meane ones to giue the reyne to this ſinne, becauſe the greater flies will breake through, when the leſſer are intangled. And if it were not, yet we muſt liue not by examples but by lawes: ſo let euen the greateſt make this account, that the more they ryot in this ſinne without concealement, the deeplyer are they

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engaged in the ſight of God: and the more their ſinne ſerues there turne in this life, it doth the more make them indebted to it: and when they haue not where withall to pay, they muſt lie by it in hell, till they haue anſwered the vttermoſt farthing. Thus wee ſee great ones will eaſely be prouoked: and ſome ſuch cauſe there might be of this wrath of theſe Eunuches, but whatſoeuer the Sire was, the baſtard is anger, and rage likely is the mother of treaſon and outragious ſinnes, *becauſe* as it *baniſheth reaſon*, and ſo giues way to all vnrulineſſe ſo *it ends in malice*, and malice will haue bloud; *yea ſuch is the progreſſe of this ſinne of anger*, that it will not *ſpare it ſelfe* to hurt another, yea *none can be priuiledged* frō the furious man he makes no difference of perſons, all cauſes are a like.

Obſ. 150. Anger the occaſion of out ragious ſinne and particularly of treaſon.

Vſ. 1 *Which as it condemneth natures prophets*, that determine anger to be the whet ſtone to couradge, and ſo giue way vnto it as a *paſſion of credit* and no ſmall aduantage, *ſo we may* learne to ſuppreſſe the ſame, being fully perſwaded, that as the wrath of man cannot fulfill the will of God, ſo much more will it make vs vnſeruiceable to men. *The way to doe this we haue taught before.*

Obſ. 151. Princes marks of treaſon and rebellion.

Well theſe Eunuches are enraged, and whome is it that they ayme at? Surely no meaner a perſon then the King: *Kings are the markes for euery one to ſhoot at. They are faire markes* that may be eaſily diſcerned, and many times they are foule markes to betray Gods glory, and therefore he iuſtly giues them vp to be betrayed of their ſubiects: *yea they make buts of their people*, and ſo the arrowes ſome-times rebounds on them-ſelues, ſo doth GOD tranſpoſe ſcepters without the ſhedding of innocent blood *ſo when conſcience will not; euen by* this feare of danger doth the Lord keepe wicked Princes in awe, that ſo they may be ſeruiceable to others, though it tend to their further condemnation, *ſo doth hee make* great ones more inexcuſable, that will build their neſt on ſuch ſandy foundations.

Vſe. 1. *And*

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Vse. 1. *And therefore*, as this may humble Princes, in the greateſt hight of their happineſſe *ſo it may comfort them to*, that they haue right in an other happineſſe; becauſe this preſent, is ſo vncertaine and ſlippery. *And ſeeing* by the tickliſhneſſe of the preſent, the Lord prouokes them to aſpire to the certaine happineſſe, and yet ſo, as euen *by this tottering ladder* they muſt climbe thereto; Oh let them learne to ſanctifie this their preſent eſtate vnto them, that it may ſo ſarre be ſecured, as may further them to heauen: *let them giue God the glory*, and maintaine peace among Men by *promoting his Ghoſpel*, and in *ioyning obedience to the ſame*. So did he preſerue good *Elizabeth* from a world of treaſons: ſo *hath he preſerued our annoynted from many conſpiracies, ſo great ſhall bee the glory of the King in the ſaluation of the Lord.*

Thus we haue heard the ſumme of the treaſon, now let vs further conſider the proſecution of the diſcouery thereof.

We haue heard heretofore, that *Mordecai* was the man that had the firſt inkling of it: hee *relates* it wiſely to Queene *Heſter*, and *Heſter* to the King: what now doth the King in this caſe? doth he preſently beleeue it? though the reporter were of credit? ſurely No: as Princes are not to be credulous, eſpecially of ſuch reports, becauſe they may wrong themſelues *in diſcouering a needeleſſe feare*, yea they may wrong the innocent, who happily maybe miſreported: yea though he were guilty yet might they wrong him to, if they proceeded to cenſure before the matter be throughly ſifted: So euen this heathen Prince keepes *decorum* herein *ſo it followeth*. That *after inquiſition made when the thing was found out.*

Obſer. 152. Sinne not to be puniſhed before it be conuinced. Gen. 18.

Behold here the equity of this heathen Prince, in a caſe of life and death ſo neerely concerning him-ſelfe, and the preuention wherof conſiſted in ſpeed, yet is he not haſty to credit a report, muchles to proceed againſt a ſuſpected offender before the offence be manifeſted & conuinced. *So doth the Lord* proceed in iudgement: *ſo is innocency* preſerued, when only accuſation gos not currant; *ſo is authority*

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3 Exod. 23. 4 Leuit. 19. Iohn, 7. Act, 23. Festus. Pilatus.

iustified: when sinne is throughly convinced: *and the offender happily prepared to repentance.* Doth our law condemne any before his cause be heard?

Vse. 1. By which wee may learne, *as not* to beleeue reports, without due inquisition; *so to condemne such rash* iudgements, which execute in the morning, and then sitte vpon him in the afternoone. I remember pollicy doth aduize in these cases of treasons to strike while the yron is hotte if the offender bee so mighty, as that he bee able to out-dare the law (as the case of ỹ *Guise* was vnder *Henry* ỹ third,) here saith wisdome, its good cutting him off first, & then declare the cause for iustifying of such execution. And surely if the offences of such great ones bee dangerous and notorious, seeing the apparantnesse thereof is a sufficient conuiction of the same, it may not be euill pollicie by such authority, as we may priuately cutte him off, especially if he bee of power to preuent publique iustice. So doth God iustly strike before the fault bee published: and so may earthly Princes proceed to execution, when the inquirie and discouery of the fact may hinder the same, and indanger their estates. *Onely herein* they must be carefull, *not to pretend lust for a law*, and to make their wills a rule of it righteousnesse. This is a prerogatiue ỹ belongeth onely vnto God. As for worldly Princes, they must dye like men; and therefore the liues of men ought to be pretious vnto them, as they will answer *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.* And therefore as suspition must not blind them, or reports misleade them, to call the life of their subiects into question; so when reports come to them, lette them *not be secure.* It is good to feare when they see but a smoake, least *Gedaliah* loose his life, by contemning the danger: And if by raking vp the ashes they discouer the fire, and so the fact proue cleare and euident, let them secure them-selues, and deliuer the innocēt; by punishing the offender, according to ỹ quallity of his sinne. *So doth this heathen Prince very maturely proceed to execution. The thing being found out saith the holy Ghost*

Ierem. 41. 1.

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the calling of the King, doth he not represent the person, and administer the office of God himselfe, who if he punish the thought of the heart, as being his prerogatiue, why may not the Prince also punish the intent, seeing he is Gods vice-gerent so to meet with sinne as that the holy purpose of the Lord in his ordinance might be best accomplished, to the good of the sinner, and safety of gouerment? And therefore seeing intent of treason pardoned, doth but giue further breath thereto, because ambition is vnsatiable, and such sinners otherwise incorrigible, then by taking them in the blade, and so cutting them timely off. Is it not more then time to preuent such desperate onsets by iust seuerity, rather then to giue way through impunity to farther mischiefe? *And* shall the Traitor thinke he 4
hath wrong done vnto him hereby? where thought of the least sinne deserues eternall vengeance if he be met withal by temporall iustice for the determinate purpose of a capital crime, which may also be a meanes for the sauing of his 5
soule? *And* what though he faile in the execution of his mischiefe? shall the Magistrate therefore faile in the execution of iustice, seeing there was no good will wanting sufficient to discouer the daungerousnesse of the person; and so in wisedome to haue him cut off? *And* may not 6
the purpose of such euils proue very hurtfull to gouerment? may it not breed *Iealousie* therein, and imputation of some bad desart? may it not worke desperateneſſe in loose gouernors and boldneſſe in the like sinnes?

Let this be a lesson for preuenting of such purposes, and the Lord giue vs vnderstanding in all things.

Thus are these rebellious seruants iustly met withal: And shall disobedient seruants scape vnpunished? had *Zimri* peace which slew his maister? did the seruants of *Ammon* carry their treason clearely?

Obs. 155. God vsually meeteth with treasons in this life.

Surely the Lord is rightcous and admirable in his iustice, though some sinnes especially are reserued to the eternall vengeance, yet hee will punish this sinne of Treason euen in this life, because it so nerely toucheth his

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Maiesty, and chalengeth his prouidence.

Vse. And therefore let not Traytors hope to go vnpuniſhed, though they ſcape at one time, yet their ſinne will find them out in the end, and *Ioab* ſhal be taken; when his iniquity is at ſ full. *And are not diſobedient ſeruants here alſo iuſtly met withall?* yea ſurely, *Iehezi* ſhall haue aleproſie, and theſe rebellious ſeruants do meet with a halter.

1 Rex. 2.
Obſer. 156. God puniſheth euill ſeruants.
2 Reg. 11

Vſe 1. *Which as it may leſſon Maiſters*, to watch ouer their ſeruants, leaſt by diſobedience they fall into theſe trobles, for which they are like to giue an account, though in the meane time the ſeruant ſmart for it; *ſo let ſeruants* here learne to performe obedience for conſcience ſake, that ſo looking for their reward from God, and not from man, they may not be driuen to ſuch deſperate courſes. *And as they* muſt looke for ſuch meaſure, if they breake out into ſuch preſumptious ſins: *So* on the contrary, let good ſeruants be aſſured, that the diligent ſhall ſtand before Princes, they ſhall not want euen plentifull recompence.

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Thus the traitors are executed, and *Ahaſhueroſh* is preſerued for the good of the Church, and who made the inſtrument thereof but *poore* Mordecai, and *gratious* Heſter: two ſeruants of the moſt high God, do this good ſeruice to their Prince. And ſo is *Ahaſhueroſh* aboundantly recompenced for all his loue to *Heſter*: he hath his life giuen him for a prey: ſo do the wicked fare the better for the elects ſake, ſo do the Children of God recompence plentifully the good that is done vnto them. *Ebedmelech* the Black-a-moore ſhal haue his life giuen him for a prey: and the Sunamite ſhall receiue her ſonne to life for receiuing the Prophet, and *Obed Edoms* houſe ſhall proſper while the Arke remaines there, Godlineſſe is neuer vnthankefull to the embracers thereof; her enemies fare the better for her, and ſhal not much more her friends? ſhe hath the promiſe of all bleſſings, and ſhall ſhe not make them good? ſhe preuailes with God, and ſhall ſhe not preuaile with men? ſhe brings peace whereſoeuer ſhe comes, and in her pleaſure is life: ritches and honor, bee at her

Obſ. 155. Gods Children not vnthankfull for ſuch kindnes as they receiue.

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they were both hanged one a tree. A fit recompence for Traitors, and a iuſt fruit of their ſinne, whoſe end is death, and *whoſe wages is damnation.* And a very ſafe courſe to be taken eſpecially with ſuch offendors, *whoſe ſparing as it* doth hazard the life of the Prince, *ſo it endaungers* alſo their owne ſoules, *yea encourageth* the wicked, and diſcourageth the loyall, *breedes confuſion of lawes and is indeed the very ſcorne of* iuſtice, *and gappe* to all licentiouſnes: Whereas by puniſhment of notorious offendors: the *lawes are eſtabliſhed, iuſtice is honored,* and *iniquity bridled, the wicked humbled,* and *God himſelfe glorified.* So *Adonijah* being ſpared will rebell againe, but when he is cut of, the throne wilbe eſtabliſhed.

Obſ. 153. Traytors are executed for their outragious offences.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

1 Reg. 12.

Vſe Oh that Princes would looke to it! haue they care to haue compaſſion on themſelues, while through foole-hardines, or fond clemency, they ſpare ſuch deſperate enemies that treaſon might hop headles and ſo loyalty might be ſecured? Surely, though there is difference to be made in a multitude of offendors: yet is the ſafety of the Prince more pretious then the liues of ten thouſand. And better it is, to cut of many rotten branches, then endanger the roote, and hinder the fruit. It is but cruel mercy, that hazards ỹ ſoule, and very fooliſh pitty to nouriſh a viper in my boſome, which hereafter may ſting me. But the King of Kings ſhall teach them true wiſdome, that if they be wiſe they wilbe wiſe to themſelues. Al the doubt may be concerning, theſe Eunuchs whether they deſerued this hainous puniſhment or no, ſeeing they miſſed of their purpoſe, & were preuented therein. The King had no hurt; and why then ſhould they be touched?

Obſ. 154. The intent of treaſon diſcouered, is to be puniſhed.

Surely though purpoſes are ſinnes in the ſight of God: yet onely actions may ſeeme liable to the cenſure of men. *Who onely can iudge* by the out-ſide, and ſo may proceed accordingly: how ſtands it then with equity that theſe mens purpoſe is puniſhed: eſpecially ſeeing in other offences the intent is not taken hold of: ſo that the act by any meanes be hindered, or *preuented: Indeed,* if we do conſider

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ſider ſinne in it owne deſart, ſo not onely the *act* but the *purpoſe*, yea, the very *thought* it ſelfe deſerues eternall puniſhment: but if we meaſure ſinne by the ſubiect wherein it is, then ſeeing God hath reconciled our perſons vnto him in Ieſus Chriſt and will remember our iniquities no more to puniſh them euerlaſtingly: ſo neither doth he to any other end chaſtize them in this life, then may make for the good of the ſinner & the glorie of his name.

And to this end ſerue the lawes of men: Which intending the ſaluation of the ſinner in the inflicting of puniſhments: as they cannot reach to the *thought* (which is only Gods prerogatiue) ſo neither do they otherwiſe faſten on the purpoſe then for a greater good: *vſually* they are confined to the *outward action*, and ſo only cenſure that: and yet therein alſo, are ſo farre ouerruled by the condition of the offendor, as to admit qualification for his peculiar good: that if clemencie be fitter for him, it is not to be denied, if ſeuerity be neceſſary, yet with this intent; that by the diſtruction of the body, the ſoule may be ſaued.

1 Cor. 5.

The intent then of the law being the good of mankind: herevpon it followeth, that though other ſinnes be only cenſured by the act, as *Murther*. *Theft* &c. Yet *Treaſon* is to be cenſured by the intent; Becauſe though it hath not taken effect, yet being a ſinne ſo dangerous both to the committer and the Kingdome: ſome ſuch courſe is to be taken by the wiſdome of the law: that ſuch deſperate miſchiefes might be vtterly preuented: how ſhall that be done?

Reaſons why the purpoſe of treaſon is to be puniſhed with death.

1

Surely, by inflicting the puniſhment vpon the intent: that ſo the intent being met withall, the act may be preuented, and all hope cut off from being pardoned for the act: ſeeing, the very intent diſcouered, is ſo deadly to the Author. *And* doth not the general good neceſſarylie force this ſeuerity? ſeeing the ſuppreſſing of the Prince, is the ruine of many thouſands? yea threatens the deſtruction of the whole common-wealth? *What ſhould* I tell you of

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the

her right hand, yea durable ritches and righteousnesse.

Why are then the children of God counted such trouble-houses, *could* the world indure were it not for them? are not the wicked preserued because of them? *Oh let vs* make much thē of such profitable guests: *let vs* learn to be thankefull of them in this point: *lette vs* take hold of the skirt of him that is a Iew, and resolue to go with him, because the Lord is with him. Well the King is preserued; and his life renued: What must this benefit be forgotten? shall *Mordecaies seruice be buried* in forgetfulnesse? No; *Behold the prouidence of God*, in prouiding for his seruant, Marke the care of the Prince that this deliuerance should be remembred. *It followeth.* 2 3 5

And this was written in the booke of daies before the King: That is this admirable deliuerance was committed to perpetuall record in the Chronicles of the Kingdome:

Behold here the faithfulnesse of God, which forgetteth not the indeauors of his children; he hath *a bottle to put their teares in*, and a book of *remembrance* for them that feare the Lord: *Hee makes inquisition for blood, and so remembreth it*; hee causeth the fact of his seruant to bee committed to perpetual record. *Obs.* 157. The Lord taketh notice of the righteousnesse of his seruants, and causeth the same to bee commended to posterity.

Vse. 1. *Shall wee then doubt of the acceptance of our* workes: *shall* wee not expect a plentifull reward thereof? Will not the Lord auenge the blood of his Saints? Wil he not wipe all the teares from our eyes?

Oh that we could beleeue! How should wee be increased? that we would consider wisely how God records our wel-doings, what a spurre would this bee to prouoke vs to go forward? What a comfort against the hard measure of the world? what peace of conscience? VVhat euidence of weldoing? Seeing the Lord makes our enemies to record the same, yea to promote vs therby to a seasonable recompence.

But what should moue this prophane Monarch to haue *Mordecaies* faithfulnesse and his preseruation thus recorded to posterity? Is this intended as a part of *Mordecai* his recompence

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recompence? Or doth he vse this as a meanes to put him in mind therof? That so in conuenient time hee might accõplish the same? Surely though it be not likely this proud Monarch had any such intent, because al is counted but due, & thankfulnes; here is a rare bird: yet no doubt but he had some respect to him-selfe. Namely ỹ by recording so great a deliuerance of his owne person, he might *both prouoke his subiects* to take notice thereof, and so to preuent the like mischiefes: as also *confirme him-selfe the better* in the hope of future good successe, and so *recreate* him-selfe at his leysure with the remembrance therof. The light of nature leades him thus far, and policy cryes aime therto: that memorable acts should bee recorded to posterity.

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Obser. 158. Records and outward monuments necessary for the memorial & vse of Gods blessings.

And may wee not profitably learne hence to helpe our memories with such faithfull registers: and so not only to blesse God for the *Art of writing and printing*: but herein especially to magnifie his prouidence, that by this meanes, *the word of truth hath bene preserued, and purely conueied* vnto vs. Surely though the soule be the register of the blessings of God, yet must the flesh vse such meanes to stir vp the heart; as humbling the same, in that it needs these outward helpes, may therby sanctifie and continue the right vse of Gods mercies, in the holy remembrance and ỹ meditation therof: let those boast of the spirit, which are not clad with the flesh, and let such despise these helpes, as haue not a body of sinne to hinder spirituall duties. And seeing though *the letter* of the word be not *the power* of it, yet ỹ power cannot bee conceiued, but by meanes of the letter: let such despise the word writtẽ, that desire not the power of it: and in the pride of their harts wil not be confined within the bounds thereof.

Anabaptist

Obs. 159. The blessings of God are to be recorded to posterity.

And doth not the spirit of God herein further teach vs to record the blessings of GOD to posterity; and to commend to the generations to come the wonderfull thinges that the Lord hath done for vs? Yea certainly, *this shal be written for the generations to come, and the people that are created shall praise the Lord.* The Lord hath commanded

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manded great mercies to be commended to posterity, and hath appointed the monuments therof to be preserued to all generations: *so were* the rod of *Aaron*, and the potte of *Manna* kept to this end, *so were Altars erected*, and new names imposed, to put Gods children in mind of his mercies towards them: so did *Samuel* write the office of the King in a book, and laid it vp before the Lord, ý it might be a perpetual glasse, for the Prince to look his duty in: so are the memorable Acts of God, which hee did at the red Sea: and at the riuer of *Arnon*, written in a booke. *So doth Iob* wish that his words were written in a booke, that so ý equity of the cause might remaine for euer. *So when* the Lord will publish his wil and haue it commended to the vse of posterity, for our better assurance of the accõplishment therof, he commands it to be written in *a booke*, yea in *a great volume*. Yea not only to a book hath the Lord committed his blessings, but he hath called also the *times* to witnesse the same, he hath appointed *special daies* for ý perpetuall memory of his mercies, to be kept sollemnly throughout al generations: this care hath ý Lord taken for the remẽbrance of his blessings, as being worthy to be had in remembrance, and *profitable* for vs to preuent forgetfulnesse, the maine cause of prophanesse, *and whereby the blessings* of God are taken away from vs, & we exposed to the burthen of his Iudgements. And shall not this care of the Lord for the remembrance of his blessings bee an heauy conuiction of our vnthankefulnesse for the same? Shal God thus striue to put vs in minde of his mercies? Shal he cause vs to record them in bookes to posterity? Shal he moue vs to set a part a day for the memoriall thereof for euer? And shall we not bee stirred vp by this meanes to cleaue vnto our God and to root out the name of *Amelecke* from vnder heauen? Who so is wise lette him vnderstand these things, to whom the arme of the Lord hath reuealed them.

Psal 102. 18.
Exod. 14.
Heb. 9. 4.
Exod. 16.
Genes. 17.
Genes. 32.
1 Sam. 10. 25.
Num. 21. 14.
Iob, 19. 23.
Esay, 8.
Ierem. 36. 2.
Exod, 14.
Psal, 78.

FINIS

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